When Day Is Done

Edgar A Guest

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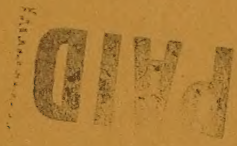

When Day Is Done

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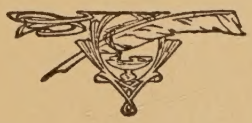
By

Edgar A. Guest

Author of

"A Heap o' Livin'"—"Just Folks"

"Over Here"—"The Path to Home"



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To

S. H. D.

A real friend

who never knows when day is done

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When Day Is Done

When day is done and the night slips down,
And I've turned my back on the busy town,
And come once more to the welcome gate
Where the roses nod and the children wait,
I tell myself as I see them smile
That life is good and its tasks worth while.

When day is done and I've come once more
To my quiet street and the friendly door,
Where the Mother reigns and the children play
And the kettle sings in the old-time way,
I throw my coat on a near-by chair
And say farewell to my pack of care.

When day is done, all the hurt and strife
And the selfishness and the greed of life,
Are left behind in the busy town;
I've ceased to worry about renown
Or gold or fame, and I'm just a dad,
Content to be with his girl and lad.

Whatever the day has brought of care,
Here love and laughter are mine to share,
Here I can claim what the rich desire —
Rest and peace by a ruddy fire,
The welcome words which the loved ones speak
And the soft caress of a baby's cheek.

When day is done and I reach my gate,
I come to a realm where there is no hate,
For here, whatever my worth may be,
Are those who cling to their faith in me;
And with love on guard at my humble door,
I have all that the world has struggled for.

The Simple Things

I would not be too wise — so very wise
That I must sneer at simple songs and creeds,
And let the glare of wisdom blind my eyes
To humble people and their humble needs.

I would not care to climb so high that I
Could never hear the children at their play,
Could only see the people passing by,
And never hear the cheering words they say.

I would not know too much — too much to smile
At trivial errors of the heart and hand,
Nor be too proud to play the friend the while,
Nor cease to help and know and understand.

I would not care to sit upon a throne,
Or build my house upon a mountain-top,
Where I must dwell in glory all alone
And never friend come in or poor man stop.

God grant that I may live upon this earth
And face the tasks which every morning brings
And never lose the glory and the worth
Of humble service and the simple things.

Life Is What We Make It

Life is a jest;
  Take the delight of it.
Laughter is best;
  Sing through the night of it.
Swiftly the tear
  And the hurt and the ache of it
Find us down here;
  Life must be what we make of it.

Life is a song;
  Dance to the thrill of it.
Grief's hours are long,
  And cold is the chill of it.
Joy is man's need;
  Let us smile for the sake of it.
This be our creed:
  Life must be what we make of it.

Life is a soul;
  The virtue and vice of it,
Strife for a goal,
  And man's strength is the price of it.
Your life and mine,
  The bare bread and the cake of it
End in this line:
  Life must be what we make of it.

What We Need

We were settin' there an' smokin' of our pipes,
discussin' things,
Like licker, votes for wimmin, an' the totterin'
thrones o' kings,
When he ups an' strokes his whiskers with his
hand an' says t'me:
"Changin' laws an' legislatures ain't, as fur as
I can see,
Goin' to make this world much better, unless
somehow we can
Find a way to make a better an' a finer sort
o' man.

"The trouble ain't with statutes or with systems
— not at all;
It's with humans jest like we air an' their petty
ways an' small.
We could stop our writin' law-books an' our
regulatin' rules
If a better sort of manhood was the product of
our schools.
For the things that we air needin' ain't no writin'
from a pen
Or bigger guns to shoot with, but a bigger type
of men.

"I reckon all these problems air jest ornery like the weeds.
They grow in soil that oughta nourish only decent deeds,
An' they waste our time an' fret us when, if we were thinkin' straight
An' livin' right, they wouldn't be so terrible an' great.
A good horse needs no snaffle, an' a good man, I opine,
Doesn't need a law to check him or to force him into line.

"If we ever start in teachin' to our children, year by year,
How to live with one another, there'll be less o' trouble here.
If we'd teach 'em how to neighbor an' to walk in honor's ways,
We could settle every problem which the mind o' man can raise.
What we're needin' isn't systems or some regulatin' plan,
But a bigger an' a finer an' a truer type o' man."

A Boy and His Dad

A boy and his dad on a fishing-trip —
There is a glorious fellowship!
Father and son and the open sky
And the white clouds lazily drifting by,
And the laughing stream as it runs along
With the clicking reel like a martial song,
And the father teaching the youngster gay
How to land a fish in the sportsman's way.

I fancy I hear them talking there
In an open boat, and the speech is fair;
And the boy is learning the ways of men
From the finest man in his youthful ken.
Kings, to the youngster, cannot compare
With the gentle father who's with him there.
And the greatest mind of the human race
Not for one minute could take his place.

Which is happier, man or boy?
The soul of the father is steeped in joy,
For he's finding out, to his heart's delight,
That his son is fit for the future fight.
He is learning the glorious depths of him,
And the thoughts he thinks and his every whim,
And he shall discover, when night comes on,
How close he has grown to his little son

A boy and his dad on a fishing-trip —
Oh, I envy them, as I see them there
Under the sky in the open air,
For out of the old, old long-ago
Come the summer days that I used to know,
When I learned life's truths from my father's lips
As I shared the joy of his fishing-trips —
Builders of life's companionship!

If I Had Youth

If I had youth I'd bid the world to try me;
I'd answer every challenge to my will.
And though the silent mountains should defy me,
I'd try to make them subject to my skill.
I'd keep my dreams and follow where they led me;
I'd glory in the hazards which abound.
I'd eat the simple fare privations fed me,
And gladly make my couch upon the ground.

If I had youth I'd ask no odds of distance,
Nor wish to tread the known and level ways.
I'd want to meet and master strong resistance,
And in a worth-while struggle spend my days.
I'd seek the task which calls for full endeavor;
I'd feel the thrill of battle in my veins.
I'd bear my burden gallantly, and never
Desert the hills to walk on common plains.

If I had youth no thought of failure lurking
Beyond to-morrow's dawn should fright my soul.
Let failure strike — it still should find me working
With faith that I should some day reach my goal.
I'd dice with danger — aye! — and glory in it;
I'd make high stakes the purpose of my throw.
I'd risk for much, and should I fail to win it,
I would not ever whimper at the blow.

If I had youth no chains of fear should bind me;
I'd brave the heights which older men must shun.
I'd leave the well-worn lanes of life behind me,
And seek to do what men have never done.
Rich prizes wait for those who do not waver;
The world needs men to battle for the truth.
It calls each hour for stronger hearts and braver.
This is the age for those who still have youth!

Looking Back

I might have been rich if I'd wanted the gold
instead of the friendships I've made.
I might have had fame if I'd sought for renown
in the hours when I purposely played.
Now I'm standing to-day on the far edge of
life, and I'm just looking backward to see
What I've done with the years and the days that
were mine, and all that has happened to me.

I haven't built much of a fortune to leave to
those who shall carry my name,
And nothing I've done shall entitle me now to
a place on the tablets of fame.
But I've loved the great sky and its spaces of
blue; I've lived with the birds and the trees;
I've turned from the splendor of silver and gold
to share in such pleasures as these.

I've given my time to the children who came;
together we've romped and we've played,
And I wouldn't exchange the glad hours spent
with them for the money that I might have
made.
I chose to be known and be loved by the few,
and was deaf to the plaudits of men;

And I'd make the same choice should the chance
come to me to live my life over again.

I've lived with my friends and I've shared in
their joys, known sorrow with all of its
tears;
I have harvested much from my acres of life,
though some say I've squandered my years.
For much that is fine has been mine to enjoy,
and I think I have lived to my best,
And I have no regret, as I'm nearing the end,
for the gold that I might have possessed.

God Made This Day for Me

Jes' the sort o' weather and jes' the sort of sky
Which seem to suit my fancy, with the white
clouds driftin' by
On a sea o' smooth blue water. Oh, I ain't an
egotist,
With an "I" in all my thinkin', but I'm willin'
to insist
That the Lord who made us humans an' the
birds in every tree
Knows my special sort o' weather an' he made
this day fer me.

This is jes' my style o' weather — sunshine
floodin' all the place,

An' the breezes from the eastward blowin' gently on my face;
An' the woods chock full o' singin' till you'd think birds never had
A single care to fret 'em or a grief to make 'em sad.
Oh, I settle down contented in the shadow of a tree,
An' tell myself right proudly that the day was made fer me.

It's my day, my sky an' sunshine, an' the temper o' the breeze —
Here's the weather I would fashion could I run things as I please:
Beauty dancin' all around me, music ringin' everywhere,
Like a weddin' celebration — why, I've plumb fergot my care
An' the tasks I should be doin' fer the rainy days to be,
While I'm huggin' the delusion that God made this day fer me.

The Grate Fire

I'm sorry for a fellow if he cannot look and see
In a grate fire's friendly flaming all the joys
which used to be.
If in quiet contemplation of a cheerful ruddy
blaze
He sees nothing there recalling all his happy
yesterdays,
Then his mind is dead to fancy and his life is
bleak and bare,
And he's doomed to walk the highways that are
always thick with care.

When the logs are dry as tinder and they crackle
with the heat,
And the sparks, like merry children, come
a-dancing round my feet,
In the cold, long nights of autumn I can sit
before the blaze
And watch a panorama born of all my yester-
days.
I can leave the present burdens and the mo-
ment's bit of woe,
And claim once more the gladness of the bygone
long-ago.

No loved ones ever vanish from the grate fire's
merry throng;
No hands in death are folded and no lips are
stilled to song.
All the friends who were are living — like the
sparks that fly about
They come romping out to greet me with the
same old merry shout,
Till it seems to me I'm playing once again on
boyhood's stage,
Where there's no such thing as sorrow and
there's no such thing as age.

I can be the care-free schoolboy! I can play the
lover, too!
I can walk through Maytime orchards with the
old sweetheart I knew,
I can dream the glad dreams over, greet the old
familiar friends
In a land where there's no parting and the
laughter never ends.
All the gladness life has given from a grate fire
I reclaim,
And I'm sorry for the fellow who sees nothing
there but flame.

The Homely Man

Looks as though a cyclone hit him —
Can't buy clothes that seem to fit him;
An' his cheeks are rough like leather,
Made for standin' any weather.
Outwards he was fashioned plainly,
Loose o' joint an' blamed ungainly,
But I'd give a lot if I'd
Been built half as fine inside.

Best thing I can tell you of him
Is the way the children love him.
Now an' then I get to thinkin'
He's much like old Abe Lincoln;
Homely like a gargoyle graven —
Worse'n that when he's unshaven;
But I'd take his ugly phiz
Jes' to have a heart like his.

I ain't over-sentimental,
But old Blake is so blamed gentle
An' so thoughtful-like of others
He reminds us of our mothers.
Rough roads he is always smoothin',
An' his way is, Oh, so soothin',
That he takes away the sting
When your heart is sorrowing.

Children gather round about him
Like they can't get on without him.
An' the old depend upon him,
Pilin' all their burdens on him,
Like as though the thing that grieves 'em
Has been lifted when he leaves 'em.
Homely? That can't be denied,
But he's glorious inside.

The Joys We Miss

There never comes a lonely day but that we
miss the laughing ways
Of those who used to walk with us through all
our happy yesterdays.
We seldom miss the earthly great — the famous
men that life has known —
But, as the years go racing by, we miss the
friends we used to own.

The chair wherein he used to sit recalls the
kindly father true,
For, Oh, so filled with fun he was, and, Oh,
so very much he knew!
And as we face the problems grave with which
the years of life are filled,
We miss the hand which guided us and miss
the voice forever stilled.

We little guessed how much he did to smooth
our pathway day by day,
How much of joy he brought to us, how much
of care he brushed away;
But now that we must tread alone the thorough-
fare of life, we find
How many burdens we were spared by him who
was so brave and kind.

Death robs the living, not the dead — they
sweetly sleep whose tasks are done;
But we are weaker than before who still must
live and labor on.
For when come care and grief to us, and heavy
burdens bring us woe,
We miss the smiling, helpful friends on whom
we leaned long years ago.

We miss the happy, tender ways of those who
brought us mirth and cheer;
We never gather round the hearth but that we
wish our friends were near;
For peace is born of simple things — a kindly
word, a goodnight kiss,
The prattle of a babe, and love — these are the
vanished joys we miss.

I care not who the man may be,
  Nor how his tasks may fret him,
Nor where he fares, nor how his cares
  And troubles may beset him,
If books have won the love of him,
  Whatever fortune hands him,
He'll always own, when he's alone,
  A friend who understands him.

Though other friends may come and go,
  And some may stoop to treason,
His books remain, through loss or gain,
  And season after season
The faithful friends for every mood,
  His joy and sorrow sharing,
For old time's sake, they'll lighter make
  The burdens he is bearing.

Oh, he has counsel at his side,
  And wisdom for his duty,
And laughter gay for hours of play,
  And tenderness and beauty,
And fellowship divinely rare,
  True friends who never doubt him,
Unchanging love, and God above,
  Who keeps good books about him.

When Sorrow Comes

When sorrow comes, as come it must,
In God a man must place his trust.
There is no power in mortal speech
The anguish of his soul to reach,
No voice, however sweet and low,
Can comfort him or ease the blow.

He cannot from his fellowmen
Take strength that will sustain him then.
With all that kindly hands will do,
And all that love may offer, too,
He must believe throughout the test
That God has willed it for the best.

We who would be his friends are dumb;
Words from our lips but feebly come;
We feel, as we extend our hands,
That one Power only understands
And truly knows the reason why
So beautiful a soul must die.

We realize how helpless then
Are all the gifts of mortal men.
No words which we have power to say
Can take the sting of grief away —
That Power which marks the sparrow's fall
Must comfort and sustain us all.

When sorrow comes, as come it must,
In God a man must place his trust.
With all the wealth which he may own,
He cannot meet the test alone,
And only he may stand serene
Who has a faith on which to lean.

Golf Luck

As a golfer I'm not one who cops the money;
I shall always be a member of the dubs;
There are times my style is positively funny;
I am awkward in my handling of the clubs.
I am not a skillful golfer, nor a plucky,
But this about myself I proudly say —
When I win a hole by freaky stroke or lucky,
I never claim I played the shot that way.

There are times, despite my blundering behavior,
When fortune seems to follow at my heels;
Now and then I play supremely in her favor,
And she lets me pull the rankest sort of steals;
She'll give to me the friendliest assistance,
I'll jump a ditch at times when I should not,
I'll top the ball and get a lot of distance —
But I don't claim that's how I played the shot.

I've hooked a ball when just that hook I needed,
And wondered how I ever turned the trick;
I've thanked my luck for what a friendly tree did,
Although my fortune made my rival sick;
Sometimes my shots turn out just as I planned 'em,
The sort of shots I usually play,
But when up to the cup I chance to land 'em,
I never claim I played 'em just that way.

There's little in my game that will commend me;
I'm not a shark who shoots the course in par;
I need good fortune often to befriend me;
I have my faults and know just what they are.
I play golf in a desperate do-or-die way,
And into traps and trouble oft I stray,
But when by chance the breaks are coming my way,
I do not claim I played the shots that way.

Contradictin' Joe

Heard of Contradictin' Joe?
Most contrary man I know.
Always sayin', "That's not so."

Nothing's ever said, but he
Steps right up to disagree —
Quarrelsome as he can be.

If you start in to recite
All the details of a fight,
He'll butt in to set you right.

Start a story that is true,
He'll begin correctin' you —
Make you out a liar, too!

Mention time o' year or day,
Makes no difference what you say,
Nothing happened just that way.

Bet you, when his soul takes flight,
An' the angels talk at night,
He'll butt in to set 'em right.

There where none should have complaints
He will be with "no's" and "ain'ts"
Contradictin' all the saints.

The Better Job

If I were running a factory
I'd stick up a sign for all to see;
I'd print it large and I'd nail it high
On every wall that the men walked by;
And I'd have it carry this sentence clear:
"The 'better job' that you want is here!"

It's the common trait of the human race
To pack up and roam from place to place;
Men have done it for ages and do it now;
Seeking to better themselves somehow
They quit their posts and their tools they drop
For a better job in another shop.

It may be I'm wrong, but I hold to this —
That something surely must be amiss
When a man worth while must move away
For the better job with the better pay;
And something is false in our own renown
When men can think of a better town.

So if I were running a factory
I'd stick up this sign for all to see,
Which never an eye in the place could miss:
"There isn't a better town than this!
You need not go wandering, far or near —
The 'better job' that you want is here!"

My Religion

My religion's lovin' God, who made us, one
and all,
Who marks, no matter where it be, the humble
sparrow's fall;
An' my religion's servin' Him the very best I can
By not despisin' anything He made, especially
man!
It's lovin' sky an' earth an' sun an' birds an'
flowers an' trees,
But lovin' human beings more than any one
of these.

I ain't no hand at preachin' an' I can't expound
the creeds;
I fancy every fellow's faith must satisfy his
needs
Or he would hunt for something else. An' I
can't tell the why
An' wherefore of the doctrines deep — and
what's more I don't try.
I reckon when this life is done and we can know
His plan,
God won't be hard on anyone who's tried to be
a man.

My religion doesn't hinge on some one rite or word;
I hold that any honest prayer a mortal makes is heard;
To love a church is well enough, but some get cold with pride
An' quite forget their fellowmen for whom the Saviour died;
I fancy he best worships God, when all is said an' done,
Who tries to be, from day to day, a friend to everyone.

If God can mark the sparrow's fall, I don't believe He'll fail
To notice us an' how we act when doubts an' fears assail;
I think He'll hold what's in our hearts above what's in our creeds,
An' judge all our religion here by our recorded deeds;
An' since man is God's greatest work since life on earth began,
He'll get to Heaven, I believe, who helps his fellowman.

What I Call Living

The miser thinks he's living when he's hoarding
up his gold;
The soldier calls it living when he's doing
something bold;
The sailor thinks it living to be tossed upon
the sea,
And upon this vital subject no two of us agree.
But I hold to the opinion, as I walk my way
along,
That living's made of laughter and good-fellow-
ship and song.

I wouldn't call it living always to be seeking
gold,
To bank all the present gladness for the days
when I'll be old.
I wouldn't call it living to spend all my strength
for fame,
And forego the many pleasures which to-day are
mine to claim.
I wouldn't for the splendor of the world set out
to roam,
And forsake my laughing children and the
peace I know at home.

Oh, the thing that I call living isn't gold or
fame at all!

It's good-fellowship and sunshine, and it's roses
by the wall;
It's evenings glad with music and a hearth fire
that's ablaze,
And the joys which come to mortals in a
thousand different ways.
It is laughter and contentment and the struggle
for a goal;
It is everything that's needful in the shaping
of a soul.

If This Were All

If this were all of life we'll know,
If this brief space of breath
Were all there is to human toil,
If death were really death,
And never should the soul arise
A finer world to see,
How foolish would our struggles seem,
How grim the earth would be!

If living were the whole of life,
To end in seventy years,
How pitiful its joys would seem!
How idle all its tears!
There'd be no faith to keep us true,
No hope to keep us strong,
And only fools would cherish dreams —
No smile would last for long.

How purposeless the strife would be
If there were nothing more,
If there were not a plan to serve,
An end to struggle for!
No reason for a mortal's birth
Except to have him die—
How silly all the goals would seem
For which men bravely try.

There must be something after death;
Behind the toil of man
There must exist a God divine
Who's working out a plan;
And this brief journey that we know
As life must really be
The gateway to a finer world
That some day we shall see.

A Christmas Carol

God bless you all this Christmas Day
And drive the cares and griefs away.
Oh, may the shining Bethlehem star
Which led the wise men from afar
Upon your heads, good sirs, still glow
To light the path that ye should go.

As God once blessed the stable grim
And made it radiant for Him;
As it was fit to shield His Son,
May thy roof be a holy one;
May all who come this house to share
Rest sweetly in His gracious care.

Within thy walls may peace abide,
The peace for which the Savior died.
Though humble be the rafters here,
Above them may the stars shine clear,
And in this home thou lovest well
May excellence of spirit dwell.

God bless you all this Christmas Day;
May Bethlehem's star still light thy way
And guide thee to the perfect peace
When every fear and doubt shall cease.
And may thy home such glory know
As did the stable long ago.

Forgotten Boyhood

He wears a long and solemn face
And drives the children from his place;
He doesn't like to hear them shout
Or race and run and romp about,
And if they chance to climb his tree,
He is as ugly as can be.
If in his yard they drive a ball,
Which near his pretty flowers should fall,
He hides the leather sphere away,
Thus hoping to prevent their play.

The youngsters worry him a lot,
This sorry man who has forgot
That once upon a time, he too
The self-same mischief used to do.
The boyhood he has left behind
Has strangely vanished from his mind,
And he is old and gray and cross
For having suffered such a loss.
He thinks he never had the joy
That is the birthright of a boy.

He has forgotten how he ran,
Or to a dog's tail tied a can,
Broke window panes, and loved to swipe
Some neighbor's apples, red and ripe —
He thinks that always, day or night,

His conduct was exactly right.
In boys to-day he cannot see
The youngster that he used to be,
Forgotten is that by-gone day,
When he was mischievous as they.

Poor man! I'm sorry for your lot.
The best of life you have forgot.
Could you remember what you were,
Unharnessed and untouched by spur,
These youngsters that you drive away
Would be your comrades here to-day.
Among them you could gayly walk
And share their laughter and their talk;
You could be young and blithe as they,
Could you recall your yesterday.

The Peaks of Valor

These are the peaks of valor; keeping clean your
father's name,
Too brave for petty profit to risk the brand of
shame,
Adventuring for the future, yet mindful of the
past,
For God, for country and for home, still valor-
ous to the last.

These are the peaks of valor: a speech that knows no lie,
A standard of what's right and wrong which no man's wealth can buy,
All unafraid of failure, to venture forth to fight,
Yet never for the victory's sake to turn away from right.

Ten thousand times the victor is he who fails to win,
Who could have worn the conqueror's crown by stooping low in sin;
Ten thousand times the braver is he who turns away
And scorns to crush a weaker man that he may rule the day.

These are the peaks of valor: standing firm and standing true
To the best your father taught you and the best you've learned anew,
Helpful to all who need you, winning what joys you can,
Writing in triumph to the end your record as a man.

When the Minister Calls

My Paw says that it used to be,
Whenever the minister came for tea,
'At they sat up straight in their chairs at night
An' put all their common things out o' sight,
An' nobody cracked a joke or grinned,
But they talked o' the way that people sinned,
An' the burnin' fires that would cook you sure
When you came to die, if you wasn't pure —
Such a gloomy affair it used to be
Whenever the minister came for tea.

But now when the minister comes to call
I get him out for a game of ball,
And you'd never know if you'd see him bat,
Without any coat or vest or hat,
That he is a minister, no, siree!
He looks like a regular man to me.
An' he knows just how to go down to the dirt
For the grounders hot without gettin' hurt —
An' when they call us, both him an' me
Have to git washed up again for tea.

Our minister says if you'll just play fair
You'll be fit for heaven or anywhere;
An' fun's all right if your hands are clean
An' you never cheat an' you don't get mean.
He says that he never has understood

Why a feller can't play an' still be good.
An' my Paw says that he's just the kind
Of a minister that he likes to find —
So I'm always tickled as I can be
Whenever our minister comes for tea.

The Age of Ink

Swiftly the changes come. Each day
Sees some lost beauty blown away
And some new touch of lovely grace
Come into life to take its place.
The little babe that once we had
One morning woke a roguish lad;
The babe that we had put to bed
Out of our arms and lives had fled.

Frocks vanished from our castle then,
Ne'er to be worn or seen again,
And in his knickerbocker pride
He boasted pockets at each side
And stored them deep with various things—
Stones, tops and jacks and colored strings;
Then for a time we claimed the joy
Of calling him our little boy.

Brief was the reign of such a spell.
One morning sounded out a bell;

With tears I saw her brown eyes swim
And knew that it was calling him.
Time, the harsh master of us all,
Was bidding him to heed his call;
This shadow fell across life's pool—
Our boy was on his way to school.

Our little boy! And still we dreamed,
For such a little boy he seemed!
And yesterday, with eyes aglow
Like one who has just come to know
Some great and unexpected bliss,
He bounded in, announcing this:
"Oh, Dad! Oh, Ma! Say, what d'you think?
This year we're going to write with ink!"

Here was a change I'd not foreseen,
Another step from what had been.
I paused a little while to think
About this older age of ink—
What follows this great step, thought I,
What next shall come as the time goes by?
And something said: "His pathway leads
Unto the day he'll write with deeds."

No Use Sighin'

No use frettin' when the rain comes down,
No use grievin' when the gray clouds frown,
No use sighin' when the wind blows strong,
No use wailin' when the world's all wrong;
Only thing that a man can do
Is work an' wait till the sky gets blue.

No use mopin' when you lose the game,
No use sobbin' if you're free from shame,
No use cryin' when the harm is done,
Just keep on tryin' an' workin' on;
Only thing for a man to do,
Is take the loss an' begin anew.

No use weepin' when the milk is spilled,
No use growlin' when your hopes are killed,
No use kickin' when the lightnin' strikes
Or the floods come along an' wreck your dykes;
Only thing for a man right then
Is to grit his teeth an' start again.

For it's how life is an' the way things are
That you've got to face if you travel far;
An' the storms will come an' the failures, too,
An' plans go wrong spite of all you do;
An' the only thing that will help you win,
Is the grit of a man and a stern set chin.

No Children!

No children in the house to play —
It must be hard to live that way!
I wonder what the people do
When night comes on and the work is through,
With no glad little folks to shout,
No eager feet to race about,
No youthful tongues to chatter on
About the joy that's been and gone?
The house might be a castle fine,
But what a lonely place to dine!

No children in the house at all,
No fingermarks upon the wall,
No corner where the toys are piled —
Sure indication of a child.
No little lips to breathe the prayer
That God shall keep you in His care,
No glad caress and welcome sweet
When night returns you to your street;
No little lips a kiss to give —
Oh, what a lonely way to live!

No children in the house! I fear
We could not stand it half a year.
What would we talk about at night,
Plan for and work with all our might,
Hold common dreams about and find

True union of heart and mind,
If we two had no greater care
Than what we both should eat and wear?
We never knew love's brightest flame
Until the day the baby came.

And now we could not get along
Without their laughter and their song.
Joy is not bottled on a shelf,
It cannot feed upon itself,
And even love, if it shall wear,
Must find its happiness in care;
Dull we'd become of mind and speech
Had we no little ones to teach.
No children in the house to play!
Oh, we could never live that way!

The Loss Is Not So Great

It is better as it is: I have failed but I can sleep;
Though the pit I now am in is very dark and deep
I can walk to-morrow's streets and can meet to-morrow's men
Unashamed to face their gaze as I go to work again.

I have lost the hope I had; in the dust are all
my dreams,
But my loss is not so great or so dreadful as
it seems;
I made my fight and though I failed I need not
slink away
For I do not have to fear what another man
may say.

They may call me over-bold, they may say that
I was frail;
They may tell I dared too much and was doomed
at last to fail;
They may talk my battle o'er and discuss it as
they choose,
But I did no brother wrong — I'm the only one
to lose.

It is better as it is: I have kept my self-respect.
I can walk to-morrow's streets meeting all men
head erect.
No man can charge his loss to a pledge I did
not keep;
I have no shame to regret: I have failed, but I
can sleep.

Dan McGann Declares Himself

Said Dan McGann to a foreign man who worked
at the selfsame bench,
"Let me tell you this," and for emphasis he
flourished a Stilson wrench;
"Don't talk to me of the bourjoissee, don't
open your mouth to speak
Of your socialists or your anarchists, don't
mention the bolsheveek,
For I've had enough of this foreign stuff, I'm
sick as a man can be
Of the speech of hate, and I'm tellin' you
straight that this is the land for me!

"If you want to brag, just take that flag an'
boast of its field o' blue,
An' praise the dead an' the blood they shed for
the peace o' the likes o' you.
Enough you've raved," and once more he waved
his wrench in a forceful way,
"O' the cunning creed o' some Russian breed;
I stand for the U. S. A.!
I'm done with your fads, and your wild-eyed
lads. Don't flourish your rag o' red
Where I can see or by night there'll be tall
candles around your bed.

" So tip your hat to a flag like that! Thank God
for its stripes an' stars!
Thank God you're here where the roads are
clear, away from your kings and czars.
I can't just say what I feel to-day, for I'm not a
talkin' man,
But, first an' last, I am standin' fast for all
that's American.
So don't you speak of the bolsheveek, it's sick
of that stuff I am!
One God, one flag is the creed I brag! I'm
boostin' for Uncle Sam."

A Boy and His Stomach

What's the matter with you — ain't I always
been your friend?
Ain't I been a pardner to you? All my pennies
don't I spend
In gettin' nice things for you? Don't I give
you lots of cake?
Say, stummick, what's the matter, that you had
to go an' ache?

Why, I loaded you with good things yesterday,
I gave you more
Potatoes, squash an' turkey than you'd ever had
before.
I gave you nuts an' candy, pumpkin pie an'
chocolate cake,
An' las' night when I got to bed you had to
go an' ache.

Say, what's the matter with you—ain't you
satisfied at all?
I gave you all you wanted, you was hard jes'
like a ball,
An' you couldn't hold another bit of puddin',
yet las' night
You ached mos' awful, stummick; that ain't
treatin' me jes' right.

I've been a friend to you, I have, why ain't you
a friend o' mine?
They gave me castor oil last night because you
made me whine.
I'm awful sick this mornin' an' I'm feelin'
mighty blue,
'Cause you don't appreciate the things I do
for you.

Home and the Office

Home is the place where the laughter should ring,
And man should be found at his best.
Let the cares of the day be as great as they may,
The night has been fashioned for rest.
So leave at the door when the toiling is o'er
All the burdens of worktime behind,
And just be a dad to your girl or your lad —
A dad of the rollicking kind.

The office is made for the tasks you must face;
It is built for the work you must do;
You may sit there and sigh as your cares pile up high,
And no one may criticize you;
You may worry and fret as you think of your debt,
You may grumble when plans go astray,
But when it comes night, and you shut your desk tight,
Don't carry the burdens away.

Keep daytime for toil and the nightime for play,
Work as hard as you choose in the town,
But when the day ends, and the darkness descends,
Just forget that you're wearing a frown —

Go home with a smile! Oh, you'll find it worth while;
Go home light of heart and of mind;
Go home and be glad that you're loved as a dad,
A dad of the fun-loving kind.

He's Taken Out His Papers

He's taken out his papers, an' he's just like you an' me.
He's sworn to love the Stars and Stripes an' die for it, says he.
An' he's done with dukes an' princes, an' he's done with kings an' queens,
An' he's pledged himself to freedom, for he knows what freedom means.

He's bought himself a bit of ground, an', Lord, he's proud an' glad!
For in the land he came from that is what he never had.
Now his kids can beat his writin', an' they're readin' books, says he,
That the children in his country never get a chance to see.

He's taken out his papers, an' he's prouder than a king:
"It means a lot to me," says he, "just like the breath o' spring,

For a new life lies before us; we've got hope
an' faith an' cheer;
We can face the future bravely, an' our kids
don't need to fear."

He's taken out his papers, an' his step is light
to-day,
For a load is off his shoulders an' he treads
an easier way;
An' he'll tell you, if you ask him, so that you
can understand,
Just what freedom means to people who have
known some other land.

Castor Oil

I don't mind lickin's, now an' then,
An' I can even stand it when
My mother calls me in from play
To run some errand right away.
There's things 'bout bein' just a boy
That ain't all happiness an' joy,
But I suppose I've got to stand
My share o' trouble in this land,
An' I ain't kickin' much — but, say,
The worst of parents is that they
Don't realize just how they spoil
A feller's life with castor oil.

Of all the awful stuff, Gee Whiz!
That is the very worst there is.
An' every time if I complain,
Or say I've got a little pain,
There's nothing else that they can think
'Cept castor oil for me to drink.
I notice, though, when Pa is ill,
That he gets fixed up with a pill,
An' Pa don't handle Mother rough
An' make her swallow nasty stuff;
But when I've got a little ache,
It's castor oil I've got to take.

I don't mind goin' up to bed
Afore I get the chapter read;
I don't mind being scolded, too,
For lots of things I didn't do;
But, Gee! I hate it when they say,
"Come! Swallow this—an' right away!"
Let poets sing about the joy
It is to be a little boy,
I'll tell the truth about my case:
The poets here can have my place,
An' I will take their life of toil
If they will take my castor oil.

A Father's Wish

What do I want my boy to be?
Oft is the question asked of me,
And oft I ask it of myself —
What corner, niche or post or shelf
In the great hall of life would I
Select for him to occupy?
Statesman or writer, poet, sage
Or toiler for a weekly wage,
Artist or artisan? Oh, what
Is to become his future lot?
For him I do not dare to plan;
I only hope he'll be a man.

I leave it free for him to choose
The tools of life which he shall use,
Brush, pen or chisel, lathe or wrench,
The desk of commerce or the bench,
And pray that when he makes his choice
In each day's task he shall rejoice.
I know somewhere there is a need
For him to labor and succeed;
Somewhere, if he be clean and true,
Loyal and honest through and through,
He shall be fit for any clan,
And so I hope he'll be a man.

I would not build my hope or ask
That he shall do some certain task,
Or bend his will to suit my own;
He shall select his post alone.
Life needs a thousand kinds of men,
Toilers and masters of the pen,
Doctors, mechanics, sturdy hands
To do the work which it commands,
And wheresoe'er he's pleased to go,
Honor and triumph he may know.
Therefore I must do all I can
To teach my boy to be a man.

No Better Land Than This

If I knew a better country in this glorious world to-day
Where a man's work hours are shorter and he's drawing bigger pay,
If the Briton or the Frenchman had an easier life than mine,
I'd pack my goods this minute and I'd sail across the brine.
But I notice when an alien wants a land of hope and cheer,
And a future for his children, he comes out and settles here.

Here's the glorious land of Freedom! Here's
the milk and honey goal
For the peasant out of Russia, for the long-sub-
jected Pole.
It is here the sons of Italy and men of Austria
turn
For the comfort of their bodies and the wages
they can earn.
And with all that men complain of, and with all
that goes amiss,
There's no happier, better nation on the world's
broad face than this.

So I'm thinking when I listen to the wails of
discontent,
And some foreign disbeliever spreads his evil
sentiment,
That the breed of hate and envy that is sowing
sin and shame
In this glorious land of Freedom should go
back from whence it came.
And I hold it is the duty, rich or poor, of every
man
Who enjoys this country's bounty to be all
American.

A Boy and His Dog

A boy and his dog make a glorious pair:
No better friendship is found anywhere,
For they talk and they walk and they run and they play,
And they have their deep secrets for many a day;
And that boy has a comrade who thinks and who feels,
Who walks down the road with a dog at his heels.

He may go where he will and his dog will be there,
May revel in mud and his dog will not care;
Faithful he'll stay for the slightest command
And bark with delight at the touch of his hand;
Oh, he owns a treasure which nobody steals,
Who walks down the road with a dog at his heels.

No other can lure him away from his side;
He's proof against riches and station and pride;
Fine dress does not charm him, and flattery's breath
Is lost on the dog, for he's faithful to death;
He sees the great soul which the body conceals—
Oh, it's great to be young with a dog at your heels!

"Wait Till Your Pa Comes Home"

"Wait till your Pa comes home!" Oh, dear!
What a dreadful threat for a boy to hear.
Yet never a boy of three or four
But has heard it a thousand times or more.
"Wait till your Pa comes home, my lad,
And see what you'll get for being bad,

"Wait till your Pa comes home, you scamp!
You've soiled the walls with your fingers damp,
You've tracked the floor with your muddy feet
And fought with the boy across the street;
You've torn your clothes and you look a sight!
But wait till your Pa comes home to-night."

Now since I'm the Pa of that daily threat
Which paints me as black as a thing of jet
I rise in protest right here to say
I won't be used in so fierce a way;
No child of mine in the evening gloam
Shall be afraid of my coming home.

I want him waiting for me at night
With eyes that glisten with real delight;
When it's right that punished my boy should be
I don't want the job postponed for me;
I want to come home to a round of joy
And not to frighten a little boy.

"Wait till your Pa comes home!" Oh, dear,
What a dreadful threat for a boy to hear.
Yet that is ever his Mother's way
Of saving herself from a bitter day;
And well she knows in the evening gloam
He won't be hurt when his Pa comes home.

Nothing to Laugh At

'Taint nothin' to laugh at as I can see!
If you'd been stung by a bumble bee,
An' your nose wuz swelled an' it smarted, too,
You wouldn't want people to laugh at you.
If you had a lump that wuz full of fire,
Like you'd been touched by a red hot wire,
An' your nose spread out like a load of hay,
You wouldn't want strangers who come your way
To ask you to let 'em see the place
An' laugh at you right before your face.

What's funny about it, I'd like to know?
It isn't a joke to be hurted so!
An' how wuz I ever on earth to tell
'At the pretty flower which I stooped to smell
In our backyard wuz the very one

Which a bee wuz busily working on?
An' jus' as I got my nose down there,
He lifted his foot an' kicked for fair,
An' he planted his stinger right into me,
But it's nothin' to laugh at as I can see.

I let out a yell an' my Maw came out
To see what the trouble wuz all about.
She says from my shriek she wuz sure 'at I
Had been struck by a motor car passin' by;
But when she found what the matter wuz
She laughed just like ever'body does
An' she made me stand while she poked about
To pull his turrible stinger out.
An' my Pa laughed, too, when he looked at me,
But it's nothin' to laugh at, as I can see.

My Maw put witch hazel on the spot
To take down the swellin' but it has not.
It seems to git bigger as time goes by
An' I can't see good out o' this one eye;
An' it hurts clean down to my very toes
Whenever I've got to blow my nose.
An' all I can say is when this gits well
There ain't any flowers I'll stoop to smell.
I'm through disturbin' a bumble bee,
But it's nothin' to laugh at, as I can see.

No Room for Hate

We have room for the man with an honest dream,
With his heart on fire and his eyes agleam;
We have room for the man with a purpose true,
Who comes to our shores to start life anew,
But we haven't an inch of space for him
Who comes to plot against life and limb.

We have room for the man who will learn our ways,
Who will stand by our Flag in its troubled days;
We have room for the man who will till the soil,
Who will give his hands to a fair day's toil,
But we haven't an inch of space to spare
For the breeder of hatred and black despair.

We have room for the man who will neighbor here,
Who will keep his hands and his conscience clear;
We have room for the man who'll respect our laws
And pledge himself to our country's cause,
But we haven't an inch of land to give
To the alien breed that will alien live.

Against the vicious we bar the gate!
This is no breeding ground for hate.
This is the land of the brave and free
And such we pray it shall always be.
We have room for men who will love our flag,
But none for the friends of the scarlet rag.

The Boy and the Flag

I want my boy to love his home,
His Mother, yes, and me:
I want him, wheresoe'er he'll roam,
With us in thought to be.
I want him to love what is fine,
Nor let his standards drag,
But, Oh! I want that boy of mine
To love his country's flag!

I want him when he older grows
To love all things of earth;
And Oh! I want him, when he knows,
To choose the things of worth.
I want him to the heights to climb
Nor let ambition lag;
But, Oh! I want him all the time
To love his country's flag.

I want my boy to know the best,
I want him to be great;
I want him in Life's distant West,
Prepared for any fate.
I want him to be simple, too,
Though clever, ne'er to brag,
But, Oh! I want him, through and through,
To love his country's flag.

I want my boy to be a man,
And yet, in distant years,
I pray that he'll have eyes that can
Not quite keep back the tears
When, coming from some foreign shore
And alien scenes that fag,
Borne on its native breeze, once more
He sees his country's flag.

Too Big a Price

"They say my boy is bad," she said to me,
A tired old woman, thin and very frail.
"They caught him robbing railroad cars, an' he
Must spend from five to seven years in jail.
His Pa an' I had hoped so much for him.
He was so pretty as a little boy—"
Her eyes with tears grew very wet an' dim—
"Now nothing that we've got can give us joy!"

"What is it that you own?" I questioned then.
"The house we live in," slowly she replied,
"Two other houses worked an' slaved for, when
The boy was but a youngster at my side,
Some bonds we took the time he went to war;
I've spent my strength against the want of age—
We've always had some end to struggle for.
Now shame an' ruin smear the final page.

"His Pa has been a steady-goin' man,
Worked day an' night an' overtime as well;
He's lived an' dreamed an' sweated to his plan
To own the house an' profit should we sell;
He never drank nor played much cards at night,

He's been a worker since our wedding day,
He's lived his life to what he knows is right,
An' why should son of his now go astray?

"I've rubbed my years away on scrubbing boards,
Washed floors for women that owned less than we,
An' while they played the ladies an' the lords,
We smiled an' dreamed of happiness to be."
"And all this time where was the boy?" said I.
"Out somewhere playin'!"—Like a rifle shot
The thought went home—"My God!" she gave a cry,
"We paid too big a price for what we got."

Always Saying "Don't!"

Folks are queer as they can be,
Always sayin' "don't" to me;
Don't do this an' don't do that.
Don't annoy or tease the cat,
Don't throw stones, or climb a tree,
Don't play in the road. Oh, Gee!
Seems like when I want to play
"Don't" is all that they can say.

If I start to have some fun,
Someone hollers, "Don't you run!"
If I want to go an' play
Mother says: "Don't go away."
Seems my life is filled clear through
With the things I mustn't do.
All the time I'm shouted at:
"No, no, Sonny, don't do that!"

Don't shout so an' make a noise,
Don't play with those naughty boys,
Don't eat candy, don't eat pie,
Don't you laugh and don't you cry,
Don't stand up and don't you fall,
Don't do anything at all.
Seems to me both night an' day
"Don't" is all that they can say.

When I'm older in my ways
An' have little boys to raise,
Bet I'll let 'em race an' run
An' not always spoil their fun;
I'll not tell 'em all along
Everything they like is wrong,
An' you bet your life I won't
All the time be sayin' "don't."

Boy O' Mine

Boy o' mine, boy o' mine, this is my prayer for you,
This is my dream and my thought and my care for you:
Strong be the spirit which dwells in the breast of you,
Never may folly or shame get the best of you;
You shall be tempted in fancied security,
But make no choice that is stained with impurity.

Boy o' mine, boy o' mine, time shall command of you
Thought from the brain of you, work from the hand of you;
Voices of pleasure shall whisper and call to you,
Luring you far from the hard tasks that fall to you;
Then as you're meeting life's bitterest test of men,
God grant you strength to be true as the best of men.

Boy o' mine, boy o' mine, singing your way
along,
Cling to your laughter and cheerfully play
along;
Kind to your neighbor be, offer your hand to
him,
You shall grow great as your heart shall ex-
pand to him;
But when for victory sweet you are fighting
there,
Know that your record of life you are writing
there.

Boy o' mine, boy o' mine, this is my prayer for
you;
Never may shame pen one line of despair for
you;
Never may conquest or glory mean all to you;
Cling to your honor whatever shall fall to you;
Rather than victory, rather than fame to you,
Choose to be true and let nothing bring shame
to you.

To a Little Girl

Oh, little girl with eyes of brown
And smiles that fairly light the town,
I wonder if you really know
Just why it is we love you so,
And why—with all the little girls
With shining eyes and tangled curls
That throng and dance this big world through—
Our hearts have room for only you.

Since other little girls are gay
And laugh and sing and romp in play,
And all are beautiful to see,
Why should you mean so much to me?
And why should Mother, day and night,
Make you her source of all delight,
And always find in your caress
Her greatest sum of happiness?

Oh, there's a reason good for this,
You laughing little bright-eyed miss!
In all this town, with all its girls
With shining eyes and sun-kissed curls,

If we should search it through and through
We'd find not one so fair as you;
And none, however fair of face,
Within our hearts could take your place.

For, one glad day not long ago,
God sent you down to us below,
And said that you were ours to keep,
To guard awake and watch asleep;
And ever since the day you came
No other child has seemed the same;
No other smiles are quite so fair
As those which happily you wear.

We seem to live from day to day
To hear the things you have to say;
And just because God gave us you,
We prize the little things you do.
Though God has filled this world with flowers,
We like you best because you're ours—
In you our greatest joys we know,
And that is why we love you so.

A Feller's Hat

It's funny 'bout a feller's hat—
He can't remember where it's at,
Or where he took it off, or when,
The time he's wantin' it again.
He knows just where he leaves his shoes;
His sweater he won't often lose;
An' he can find his rubbers, but
He can't tell where his hat is put.

A feller's hat gets anywhere.
Sometimes he'll find it in a chair,
Or on the sideboard, or maybe
It's in the kitchen, just where he
Gave it a toss beside the sink
When he came in to get a drink,
An' then forgot—but anyhow
He never knows where it is now.

A feller's hat is never where
He thinks it is when he goes there;
It's never any use to look
For it upon a closet hook,
'Cause it is always in some place
It shouldn't be, to his disgrace,
An' he will find it, like as not,
Behind some radiator hot.

A feller's hat can get away
From him most any time of day,
So he can't ever find it when
He wants it to go out again;
It hides in corners dark an' grim
An' seems to want to bother him;
It disappears from sight somehow—
I wish I knew where mine is now.

The Good Little Boy

Once there was a boy who never
Tore his clothes, or hardly ever,
Never made his sister mad,
Never whipped fer bein' bad,
Never scolded by his Ma,
Never frowned at by his Pa,
Always fit fer folks to see,
Always good as good could be.

This good little boy from Heaven,
So I'm told, was only seven,
Yet he never shed real tears
When his mother scrubbed his ears,
An' at times when he was dressed
Fer a party, in his best,
He was careful of his shirt
Not to get it smeared with dirt.

Used to study late at night,
Learnin' how to read an' write;
When he played a baseball game,
Right away he always came
When his mother called him in.
An' he never made a din
But was quiet as a mouse
When they'd comp'ny in the house.

Liked to wash his hands an' face,
Liked to work around the place;
Never, when he'd tired of play,
Left his wagon in the way,
Or his bat an' ball around—
Put 'em where they could be found;
An' that good boy married Ma,
An' to-day he is my Pa.

Green Apple Time

Green apple time! an', Oh, the joy
Once more to be a healthy boy,
Casting a longin' greedy eye
At every tree he passes by!
Riskin' the direst consequence
To sneak inside a neighbor's fence
An' shake from many a loaded limb
The fruit that seems so near to him
Gosh! but once more I'd like to be
The boy I was in eighty-three.

Here I am sittin' with my pipe,
Waitin' for apples to get ripe;
Waitin' until the friendly sun
Has bronzed 'em all an' says they're done;
Not darin' any more to climb
An' pick a few afore their time.
No legs to run, no teeth to chew
The way that healthy youngsters do;
Jus' old enough to sit an' wait
An' pick my apple from a plate.

Plate apples ain't to be compared
With those you've ventured for an' dared.
It's winnin' 'em from branches high,
Or nippin' 'em when no one's by,
Or findin' 'em the time you feel
You really need another meal,
Or comin' unexpectedly
Upon a farmer's loaded tree
An' grabbin' all that you can eat,
That goes to make an apple sweet.

Green apple time! Go to it, boy,
An' cram yourself right full o' joy;
Watch for the farmer's dog an' run;
There'll come a time it can't be done.
There'll come a day you can't digest
The fruit you've stuffed into your vest,
Nor climb, but you'll sit down like me
An' watch 'em ripening on the tree,
An' jus' like me you'll have to wait
To pick your apples from a plate.

She Mothered Five

She mothered five!
Night after night she watched a little bed,
Night after night she cooled a fevered head,
Day after day she guarded little feet,
Taught little minds the dangers of the street,
Taught little lips to utter simple prayers,
Whispered of strength that some day would be theirs,
And trained them all to use it as they should.
She gave her babies to the nation's good.

She mothered five!
She gave her beauty—from her cheeks let fade
Their rose-blush beauty—to her mother trade.
She saw the wrinkles furrowing her brow,
Yet smiling said: "My boy grows stronger now."
When pleasures called she turned away and said:
"I dare not leave my babies to be fed
By strangers' hands; besides they are too small;
I must be near to hear them when they call."

She mothered five!
Night after night they sat about her knee
And heard her tell of what some day would be.

From her they learned that in the world outside
Are cruelty and vice and selfishness and pride;
From her they learned the wrongs they ought
to shun,
What things to love, what work must still be
done.
She led them through the labyrinth of youth
And brought five men and women up to truth.

She mothered five!
Her name may be unknown save to the few;
Of her the outside world but little knew;
But somewhere five are treading virtue's ways,
Serving the world and brightening its days;
Somewhere are five, who, tempted, stand up-
right,
Who cling to honor, keep her memory bright;
Somewhere this mother toils and is alive
No more as one, but in the breasts of five.

Little Girls Are Best

Little girls are mighty nice,
Take 'em any way they come;
They are always worth their price;
Life without 'em would be glum;
Run earth's lists of treasures through,
Pile 'em high until they fall,
Gold an' costly jewels, too—
Little girls are best of all.

Nothing equals 'em on earth!
I'm an old man an' I know
Any little girl is worth
More than all the gold below;
Eyes o' blue or brown or gray,
Raven hair or golden curls,
There's no joy on earth to-day
Quite so fine as little girls.

Pudgy nose or freckled face,
Fairy-like or plain to see,
God has surely blessed the place
Where a little girl may be;
They're the jewels of His crown
Dropped to earth from heaven above,
Like wee angel souls sent down
To remind us of His love.

God has made some lovely things—
Roses red an' skies o' blue,
Trees an' babbling silver springs,
Gardens glistening with dew—
But take every gift to man,
Big an' little, great an' small,
Judge it on its merits, an'
Little girls are best of all!

If we were all alike, what a dreadful world
'twould be!
No one would know which one was you or
which of us was me.
We'd never have a "Skinny" or a "Freckles"
or a "Fat,"
An' there wouldn't be a sissy boy to wear a
velvet hat;
An' we'd all of us be pitchers when we played
a baseball match,
For we'd never have a feller who'd have nerve
enough to catch.

If we were all alike an' looked an' thought the
same,
I wonder how'd they call us, 'cause there'd only
be one name.
An' there'd only be one flavor for our ice cream
sodas, too,
An' one color for a necktie an' I 'spose that
would be blue;
An' maybe we'd have mothers who were very
fond of curls,
An' they'd make us fellers wear our hair like
lovely little girls.

Sometimes I think it's funny when I hear some feller say
That he isn't fond of chocolate, when I eat it every day.
Or some other fellow doesn't like the books I like to read;
But I'm glad that we are different, yes, siree! I am indeed.
If everybody looked alike an' talked alike, Oh, Gee!
We'd never know which one was you or which of us was me.

Aw Gee Whiz!

Queerest little chap he is,
Always saying: "Aw Gee Whiz!"
Needing something from the store
That you've got to send him for
And you call him from his play,
Then it is you hear him say:
"Aw Gee Whiz!"

Seems that most expressive phrase
Is a part of childhood days;
Call him in at supper time,

Hands and face all smeared with grime,
Send him up to wash, and he
Answers you disgustedly:
"Aw Gee Whiz!"

When it's time to go to bed
And he'd rather play instead,
As you call him from the street,
He comes in with dragging feet,
Knowing that he has to go,
Then it is he mutters low:
"Aw Gee Whiz!"

Makes no difference what you ask
Of him as a little task;
He has yet to learn that life
Crosses many a joy with strife,
So when duty mars his play,
Always we can hear him say:
"Aw Gee Whiz!"

Practicing Time

Always whenever I want to play
I've got to practice an hour a day,
Get through breakfast an' make my bed,
And Mother says: "Marjorie, run ahead!
There's a time for work and a time for fun,
So go and get your practicing done."
And Bud, he chuckles and says to me:
"Yes, do your practicing, Marjorie."
A brother's an awful tease, you know,
And he just says that 'cause I hate it so.

They leave me alone in the parlor there
To play the scales or "The Maiden's Prayer,"
And if I stop, Mother's bound to call,
"Marjorie dear, you're not playing at all!
Don't waste your time, but keep right on,
Or you'll have to stay when the hour is gone."
Or maybe the maid looks in at me
And says: "You're not playing, as I can see.
Just hustle along—I've got work to do
And I can't dust the room until you get
through."

Then when I've run over the scales and things
Like "The Fairies' Dance," or "The Mountain
Springs,"
And my fingers ache and my head is sore,
I find I must sit there a half hour more.
An hour is terribly long, I say,
When you've got to practice and want to play.
So slowly at times has the big hand dropped
That I was sure that the clock had stopped,
But Mother called down to me: "Don't forget—
A full hour, please. It's not over yet."

Oh, when I get big and have children, too,
There's one thing that I will never do—
I won't have brothers to tease the girls
And make them mad when they pull their curls
And laugh at them when they've got to stay
And practice their music an hour a day;
I won't have a maid like the one we've got,
That likes to boss you around a lot;
And I won't have a clock that can go so slow
When it's practice time, 'cause I hate it so.

The Christmas Gift for Mother

In the Christmas times of the long ago,
There was one event we used to know
  That was better than any other;
It wasn't the toys that we hoped to get,
But the talks we had — and I hear them yet —
  Of the gift we'd buy for Mother.

If ever love fashioned a Christmas gift,
Or saved its money and practiced thrift,
  'Twas done in those days, my brother —
Those golden times of Long Gone By,
Of our happiest years, when you and I
  Talked over the gift for Mother.

We hadn't gone forth on our different ways
Nor coined our lives into yesterdays
  In the fires that smelt and smother,
And we whispered and planned in our youthful glee
Of that marvelous "something" which was to be
  The gift of our hearts to Mother.

It had to be all that our purse could give,
Something she'd treasure while she could live,
  And better than any other.
We gave it the best of our love and thought,
And, Oh, the joy when at last we'd bought
  That marvelous gift for Mother!

Now I think as we go on our different ways,
Of the joy of those vanished yesterdays.
How good it would be, my brother,
If this Christmas-time we could only know
That same sweet thrill of the Long Ago
When we shared in the gift for Mother.

Bedtime

It's bedtime, and we lock the door,
Put out the lights — the day is o'er;
All that can come of good or ill,
The record of this day to fill,
Is written down; the worries cease,
And old and young may rest in peace.

We knew not when we started out
What dangers hedged us all about,
What little pleasures we should gain,
What should be ours to bear of pain.
But now the fires are burning low,
And this day's history we know.

No harm has come. The laughter here
Has been unbroken by a tear;
We've met no hurt too great to bear,
We have not had to bow to care;
The children all are safe in bed,
There's nothing now for us to dread.

When bedtime comes and we can say
That we have safely lived the day,
How sweet the calm that settles down
And shuts away the noisy town!
There is no danger now to fear
Until to-morrow shall appear.

When the long bedtime comes, and I
In sleep eternal come to lie —
When life has nothing more in store,
And silently I close the door,
God grant my weary soul may claim
Security from hurt and shame.

The Willing Horse

I'd rather be the willing horse that people ride
to death
Than be the proud and haughty steed that
children dare not touch;
I'd rather haul a merry pack and finish out of
breath
Than never leave the barn to toil because I'm
worth too much.
So boast your noble pedigrees
And talk of manners, if you please —
The weary horse enjoys his ease
When all his work is done;
The willing horse, day in and out,
Can hear the merry children shout
And every time they are about
He shares in all their fun.

I want no guards beside my door to pick and
choose my friends for me;
I would not be shut off from men as is the
fancy steed;
I do not care when I go by that no one turns
his eyes to see
The dashing manner of my gait which marks
my noble breed;

I am content to trudge the road
And willingly to draw my load —
Sometimes to know the spur and goad
When I begin to lag;
I'd rather feel the collar jerk
And tug at me, the while I work,
Than all the tasks of life to shirk
As does the stylish nag.

So let me be the willing horse that now and then is overtasked,
Let me be one the children love and freely dare to ride —
I'd rather be the gentle steed of which too much is sometimes asked
Than be the one that never knows the youngsters at his side.
So drive me wheresoe'er you will,
On level road or up the hill,
Pile on my back the burdens still
And run me out of breath —
In love and friendship, day by day,
And kindly words I'll take my pay;
A willing horse; that is the way
I choose to meet my death.

Where Children Play

On every street there's a certain place
Where the children gather to romp and race;
There's a certain house where they meet in throngs
To play their games and to sing their songs,
And they trample the lawn with their busy feet
And they scatter their playthings about the street,
But though some folks order them off, I say,
Let the house be mine where the children play.

Armies gather about the door
And fill the air with their battle roar;
Cowboys swinging their lariat loops
Dash round the house with the wildest whoops,
And old folks have to look out when they
Are holding an Indian tribe at bay,
For danger may find them on flying feet,
Who pass by the house where the children meet.

There are lawns too lovely to bear the weight
Of a troop of boys when they roller skate;
There are porches fine that must never know
The stamping of footsteps that come and go,
But on every street there's a favorite place
Where the children gather to romp and race,
And I'm glad in my heart that it's mine to say
Ours is the house where the children play.

How Do You Buy Your Money?

How do you buy your money? For money is
bought and sold,
And each man barters himself on earth for his
silver and shining gold,
And by the bargain he makes with men, the sum
of his life is told.

Some buy their coins in a manly way, some buy
them with honest toil;
Some pay for their currency here on earth by
tilling a patch of soil;
Some buy it with copper and iron and steel,
and some with barrels of oil.

The good man buys it from day to day by giv-
ing the best he can;
He coins his strength for his children's needs
and lives to a simple plan,
And he keeps some time for the home he makes
and some for his fellowman.

But some men buy it with women's tears, and
some with a blasted name;
And some will barter the joy of life for the
fortune they hope to claim;
And some are so mad for the clink of gold that
they buy it with deeds of shame.

How do you buy your money? For money demands its price,
And some men think when they purchase coin that they mustn't be over-nice —
But beware of the man who would sell you gold at a shameful sacrifice!

Mother's Day

Let every day be Mother's Day!
Make roses grow along her way
And beauty everywhere.
Oh, never let her eyes be wet
With tears of sorrow or regret,
And never cease to care!
Come, grown up children, and rejoice
That you can hear your mother's voice!

A day for her! For you she gave
Long years of love and service brave;
For you her youth was spent.
There was no weight of hurt or care
Too heavy for her strength to bear;
She followed where you went;
Her courage and her love sublime
You could depend on all the time.

No day or night she set apart
On which to open wide her heart
And welcome you within;
There was no hour you would not be
First in her thought and memory,
Though you were black as sin!
Though skies were gray or skies were blue
Not once has she forgotten you.

Let every day be Mother's Day!
With love and roses strew her way,
And smiles of joy and pride!
Come, grown up children, to the knee
Where long ago you used to be
And never turn aside;
Oh, never let her eyes grow wet
With tears, because her babes forget.

When We Play the Fool

Last night I stood in a tawdry place
And watched the ways of the human race.
I looked at a party of shrieking girls
Piled on a table that whirls and whirls,
And saw them thrown in a tangled heap,
Sprawling and squirming and several deep.
And unto the wife who was standing by,
"These are all angels to be," said I.

I followed the ways of the merry throng
And heard the laughter and mirth and song.
Into a barrel which turned and swayed
Men and women a journey made,
And tumbling together they seemed to be
Like so many porpoises out at sea —
Men and women who'd worked all day,
Eagerly seeking a chance to play.

"What do you make of it all?" she said.
I answered: "The dead are a long time dead,
And care is bitter and duty stern,
And each must weep when it comes his turn.
And all grow weary and long for play,
So here is laughter to end the day.
Foolish? Oh, yes, it is that," said I,
"But better the laugh than the dreary sigh.

"Now look at us here, for we're like them, too,
And many the foolish things we do.
We often grow silly and seek a smile
In a thousand ways that are not worth while;
Yet after the mirth and the jest are through,
We shall all be judged by the deeds we do,
And God shall forget on the Judgment Day
The fools we were in our hours of play."

What Makes an Artist

We got to talking art one day, discussing in a general way
How some can match with brush and paint the glory of a tree,
And some in stone can catch the things of which the dreamy poet sings,
While others seem to have no way to tell the joys they see.

Old Blake had sat in silence there and let each one of us declare
Our notions of what's known as art, until he'd heard us through;
And then said he: "It seems to me that any man, whoe'er he be,
Becomes an artist by the good he daily tries to do.

"He need not write the books men read to be an artist. No, indeed!
He need not work with paint and brush to show his love of art;
Who does a kindly deed to-day and helps another on his way,
Has painted beauty on a face and played the poet's part.

"Though some of us cannot express our inmost
thoughts of loveliness,
We prove we love the beautiful by how we
act and live;
The poet singing of a tree no greater poet is
than he
Who finds it in his heart some care unto a
tree to give.

"Though he who works in marble stone the
name of artist here may own,
No less an artist is the man who guards his
children well;
'Tis art to love the fine and true; by what we
are and what we do
How much we love life's nobler things to all
the world we tell."

She Powders Her Nose

A woman is queer, there's no doubt about that.
She hates to be thin and she hates to be fat;
One minute it's laughter, the next it's a cry —
You can't understand her, however you try;
But there's one thing about her which everyone
knows —
A woman's not dressed till she powders her nose.

You never can tell what a woman will say;
She's a law to herself every hour of the day.
It keeps a man guessing to know what to do,
And mostly he's wrong when his guessing is through;
But this you can bet on, wherever she goes
She'll find some occasion to powder her nose.

I've studied the sex for a number of years;
I've watched her in laughter and seen her in tears;
On her ways and her whims I have pondered a lot,
To find what will please her and just what will not;
But all that I've learned from the start to the close
Is that sooner or later she'll powder her nose.

At church or a ball game, a dance or a show,
There's one thing about her I know that I know —
At weddings or funerals, dinners of taste,
You can bet that her hand will dive into her waist,
And every few minutes she'll strike up a pose,
And the whole world must wait till she powders her nose.

When Mother's Sewing Buttons On

When Mother's sewing buttons on
Their little garments, one by one,
I settle down contented there
And watch her in her rocking chair.
She's at the task she likes the best —
Each little waist and undervest
She fondles in a mother's way
And notes each sign of sturdy play,
And shakes her head and says to me:
"I wonder how this came to be?"

There's something in her patient eyes,
As in and out her needle flies,
Which seems to tell the joy she takes
In every little stitch she makes;
An hour of peace has settled down;
Hushed is the clamor of the town,
And even I am different then,
For I forsake the ways of men
And see about the garments there
Bright visions of a happy pair.

Buttons are closely linked to joy.
Each little girl and little boy
Who dares to climb the garden fence
Buys that delight at their expense.
Buttons are childhood's tattletales —
Swifter than telegrams or mails
They fly to tell of moments glad
That little boys and girls have had;
And Mother reads the stories there
In every vacant space and tear.

She sweetly smiles and says to me:
"How sturdy they have grown to be!
It keeps me busy to repair
The shirts and things they have to wear."
I chuckle as I watch her sew,
For joy has set the room aglow,
And in the picture I can see
The strength which means so much to me.
The scene is good to look upon
When Mother's sewing buttons on.

The Chip on Your Shoulder

You'll learn when you're older that chip on your shoulder
Which you dare other boys to upset,
And stand up and fight for and struggle and smite for,
Has caused you much shame and regret.
When Time, life's adviser, has made you much wiser,
You won't be so quick with the blow;
You won't be so willing to fight for a shilling,
And change a good friend to a foe.

You won't be a sticker for trifles, and bicker
And quarrel for nothing at all;
You'll grow to be kinder, more thoughtful and blinder
To faults which are petty and small.
You won't take the trouble your two fists to double
When someone your pride may offend;
When with rage now you bristle you'll smile or you'll whistle,
And keep the good will of a friend.

You'll learn when you're older that chip on your shoulder
Which proudly you battle to guard,

Has frequently shamed you and often defamed
you
And left you a record that's marred!
When you've grown calm and steady, you won't
be so ready
To fight for a difference that's small,
For you'll know, when you're older that chip
on your shoulder
Is only a chip after all.

All for the Best

Things mostly happen for the best.
However hard it seems to-day,
When some fond plan has gone astray
Or what you've wished for most is lost
An' you sit countin' up the cost
With eyes half-blind by tears o' grief
While doubt is chokin' out belief,
You'll find when all is understood
That what seemed bad was really good.

Life can't be counted in a day.
The present rain that will not stop
Next autumn means a bumper crop.
We wonder why some things must be —
Care's purpose we can seldom see —

An' yet long afterwards we turn
To view the past, an' then we learn
That what once filled our minds with doubt
Was good for us as it worked out.

I've never known an hour of care
But that I've later come to see
That it has brought some joy to me.
Even the sorrows I have borne,
Leavin' me lonely an' forlorn
An' hurt an' bruised an' sick at heart,
In life's great plan have had a part.
An' though I could not understand
Why I should bow to Death's command,
As time went on I came to know
That it was really better so.

Things mostly happen for the best.
So narrow is our vision here
That we are blinded by a tear
An' stunned by every hurt an' blow
Which comes to-day to strike us low.
An' yet some day we turn an' find
That what seemed cruel once was kind.
Most things, I hold, are wisely planned
If we could only understand.

The Kick Under the Table

After a man has been married awhile,
And his wife has grown used to his manner and style,
When she knows from the twinkle that lights up his eye
The thoughts he is thinking, the wherefore and why,
And just what he'll say, and just what he'll do,
And is sure that he'll make a bad break ere he's through,
She has one little trick that she'll work when she's able —
She takes a sly kick at him under the table.

He may fancy the story he's telling is true,
Or he's doing the thing which is proper to do;
He may fancy he's holding his own with the rest,
The life of the party and right at his best,
When quickly he learns to his utter dismay,
That he mustn't say what he's just started to say.
He is stopped at the place where he hoped to begin,
By his wife, who has taken a kick at his shin.

If he picks the wrong fork for the salad, he knows

That fact by the feel of his wife's slippered toes.
If he's started a bit of untellable news,
On the calf of his leg there is planted a bruise.
Oh, I wonder sometimes what would happen to me
If the wife were not seated just where she could be
On guard every minute to watch every trick,
And keep me in line all the time with her kick.

Leader of the Gang

Seems only just a year ago that he was toddling round the place
In pretty little colored suits and with a pink and shining face.
I used to hold him in my arms to watch when our canary sang,
And now tonight he tells me that he's leader of his gang.

It seems but yesterday, I vow, that I with fear was almost dumb,
Living those dreadful hours of care waiting the time for him to come;
And I can still recall the thrill of that first cry of his which rang
Within our walls. And now that babe tells me he's leader of his gang.

Gone from our lives are all the joys which
yesterday we used to own;
The baby that we thought we had, out of the
little home has flown,
And in his place another stands, whose gar-
ments in disorder hang,
A lad who now with pride proclaims that he's
the leader of his gang.

And yet somehow I do not grieve for what it
seems we may have lost;
To have so strong a boy as this, most cheerfully
I pay the cost.
I find myself a sense of joy to comfort every
little pang,
And pray that they shall find in him a worthy
leader of the gang.

Ma and the Ouija Board

I don't know what it's all about, but Ma says
that she wants to know
If spirits in the other world can really talk to
us below.
An' Pa says, "Gosh! there's folks enough on
earth to talk to, I should think,
Without you pesterin' the folks whose souls
have gone across the brink."
But Ma, she wants to find out things an' study
on her own accord,
An' so a month or two ago she went an' bought
a ouija board.

It's just a shiny piece of wood, with letters
printed here an' there,
An' has a little table which you put your fingers
on with care,
An' then you sit an' whisper low some question
that you want to know.
Then by an' by the spirit comes an' makes the
little table go,
An' Ma, she starts to giggle then an' Pa just
grumbles out, "Oh, Lord!
I wish you hadn't bought this thing. We
didn't need a ouija board."

"You're movin' it!" says Ma to Pa. "I'm not!" says Pa, "I know it's you;
You're makin' it spell things to us that you know very well aren't true."
"That isn't so," says Ma to him, "but I am certain from the way
The ouija moves that you're the one who's tellin' it just what to say."
"It's just 'lectricity," says Pa; "like batteries all men are stored,
But anyhow I don't believe we ought to have a ouija board."

One night Ma got it out, an' said, "Now, Pa, I want you to be fair,
Just keep right still an' let your hands rest lightly on the table there.
Oh, Ouija, tell me, tell me true, are we to buy another car,
An' will we get it very soon?" she asked. "Oh, tell us from afar."
"Don't buy a car," the letters spelled, "the price this year you can't afford."
Then Ma got mad, an' since that time she's never used the ouija board.

The Call of the Woods

I must get out to the woods again, to the whispering trees and the birds awing,
Away from the haunts of pale-faced men, to the spaces wide where strength is king;
I must get out where the skies are blue and the air is clean and the rest is sweet,
Out where there's never a task to do or a goal to reach or a foe to meet.

I must get out on the trails once more that wind through shadowy haunts and cool,
Away from the presence of wall and door, and see myself in a crystal pool;
I must get out with the silent things, where neither laughter nor hate is heard,
Where malice never the humblest stings and no one is hurt by a spoken word.

Oh, I've heard the call of the tall white pine, and heard the call of the running brook;
I'm tired of the tasks which each day are mine; I'm weary of reading a printed book.
I want to get out of the din and strife, the clang and clamor of turning wheel,
And walk for a day where life is life, and the joys are true and the pictures real.

Committee Meetings

For this and that and various things
It seems that men must get together,
To purchase cups or diamond rings
Or to discuss the price of leather.
From nine to ten, or two to three,
Or any hour that's fast and fleeting,
There is a constant call for me
To go to some committee meeting.

The church has serious work to do,
The lodge and club has need of workers,
They ask for just an hour or two —
Surely I will not join the shirkers?
Though I have duties of my own
I should not drop before completing,
There comes the call by telephone
To go to some committee meeting.

No longer may I eat my lunch
In quietude and contemplation;
I must foregather with the bunch
To raise a fund to save the nation.
And I must talk of plans and schemes
The while a scanty bite I'm eating,
Until I vow to-day it seems
My life is one committee meeting.

When over me the night shall fall,
And my poor soul goes upwards winging
Unto that heavenly realm, where all
Is bright with joy and gay with singing,
I hope to hear St. Peter say —
And I shall thank him for the greeting:
"Come in and rest from day to day;
Here there is no committee meeting!"

Pa and the Monthly Bills

When Ma gets out the monthly bills and sets
them all in front of Dad,
She makes us children run away because she
knows he may get mad;
An' then she smiles a bit and says: "I hope
you will not fuss and fret —
There's nothing here except the things I abso-
lutely had to get!"
An' Pa he looks 'em over first. "The things you
had to have!" says he;
"I s'pose that we'd have died without that
twenty dollar longeree."

Then he starts in to write the checks for laun-
dry an' for light an' gas,
An' never says a word 'bout them — because
they're small he lets 'em pass.

But when he starts to grunt an' groan, an' stops the while his pipe he fills,
We know that he is gettin' down to where Ma's hid the bigger bills.
"Just what we had to have," says he, "an' I'm supposed to pay the tolls;
Nine dollars an' a half for — say, what the deuce are camisoles?

"If you should break a leg," says Pa, "an couldn't get down town to shop,
I'll bet the dry goods men would see their business take an awful drop,
An' if they missed you for a week, they'd have to fire a dozen clerks!
Say, couldn't we have got along without this bunch of Billie Burkes?"
But Ma just sits an' grins at him, an' never has a word to say,
Because she says Pa likes to fuss about the bills he has to pay.

Bob White

Out near the links where I go to play
My favorite game from day to day,
There's a friend of mine that I've never met
Walked with or broken bread with, yet
I've talked to him oft and he's talked to me
Whenever I've been where he's chanced to be;
He's a cheery old chap who keeps out of sight,
A gay little fellow whose name is Bob White.

Bob White! Bob White! I can hear him call
As I follow the trail to my little ball —
Bob White! Bob White! with a note of cheer
That was just designed for a mortal ear.
Then I drift far off from the world of men
And I send an answer right back to him then;
An' we whistle away to each other there,
Glad of the life which is ours to share.

Bob White! Bob White! May you live to be
The head of a numerous family!
May you boldly call to your friends out here,
With never an enemy's gun to fear.
I'm a better man as I pass along,
For your cheery call and your bit of song.
May your food be plenty and skies be bright
To the end of your days, good friend Bob White!

When Ma Wants Something New

Last night Ma said to Pa: "My dear,
The Williamsons are coming here
To visit for a week or two,
An' I must have a talk with you.
We need some things which we must get —
You promised me a dinner set,
An' I should like it while they're here."
An' Pa looked up an' said: "My dear,
A dinner set? Well, I guess not.
What's happened to the one we've got?"

"We need a parlor rug," says Ma.
"We've got a parlor rug," says Pa.
"We ought to have another chair."
"You're sittin' in a good one there."
"The parlor curtains are a fright."
"When these are washed they look all right."
"The old stuff's pitiful to see."
"It still looks mighty good to me."
"The sofa's worn beyond repair."
"It doesn't look so bad, I swear."

"Gee Whiz, you make me tired," says Ma.
"Why, what's the matter now?" says Pa.
"You come an' go an' never see
How old our stuff has grown to be;
It still looks just the same to you
As what it did when it was new,
An' every time you think it strange
That I should like to have a change."
"I'm gettin' old," says Pa. "Maybe
You'd like a younger man than me."

"If this old rug was worn an' thin,
At night you'd still come walkin' in
An' throw your hat upon a chair
An' never see a single tear;
So long as any chair could stand
An' bear your weight you'd think it grand.
If home depended all on you,
It never would get something new."
"All right," says Pa, "go buy the stuff!
But, say, am I still good enough?"

Sittin' on the Porch

Sittin' on the porch at night when all the tasks are done,
Just restin' there an' talkin', with my easy slippers on,
An' my shirt band thrown wide open an' my feet upon the rail,
Oh, it's then I'm at my richest, with a wealth that cannot fail;
For the scent of early roses seems to flood the evening air,
An' a throne of downright gladness is my wicker rocking chair.

The dog asleep beside me, an' the children rompin' 'round
With their shrieks of merry laughter, Oh, there is no gladder sound
To the ears o' weary mortals, spite of all the scoffers say,
Or a grander bit of music than the children at their play!
An' I tell myself times over, when I'm sittin' there at night,
That the world in which I'm livin' is a place o' real delight.

Then the moon begins its climbin' an' the stars
shine overhead,
An' the mother calls the children an' she takes
'em up to bed,
An' I smoke my pipe in silence an' I think o'
many things,
An' balance up my riches with the lonesomeness
o' kings,
An' I come to this conclusion, an' I'll wager that
I'm right —
That I'm happier than they are, sittin' on my
porch at night.

With Dog and Gun

Out in the woods with a dog an' gun
Is my idee of a real day's fun.
'Tain't the birds that I'm out to kill
That furnish me with the finest thrill,
'Cause I never worry or fret a lot,
Or curse my luck if I miss a shot.
There's many a time, an' I don't know why,
That I shoot too low or I aim too high,
An' all I can see is the distant whirr
Of a bird that's gittin' back home to her —
Yep, gittin' back home at the end o' day,
An' I'm just as glad that he got away.

There's a whole lot more in the woods o' fall
Than the birds you bag — if you think at all.
There's colors o' gold an' red an' brown
As never were known in the busy town;
There's room to breathe in the purest air
An' something worth looking at everywhere;
There's the dog who's leadin' you on an' on
To a patch o' cover where birds have gone,
An' standin' there, without move or change,
Till you give the sign that you've got the range.
That's thrill enough for my blood, I say,
So why should I care if they get away?

Fact is, there are times that I'd ruther miss
Than to bring 'em down, 'cause I feel like this:
There's a heap more joy in a living thing
Than a breast crushed in or a broken wing,
An' I can't feel right, an' I never will,
When I look at a bird that I've dared to kill.
Oh, I'm jus' plumb happy to tramp about
An' follow my dog as he hunts 'em out,
Jus' watchin' him point in his silent way
Where the Bob Whites are an' the partridge
stay;
For the joy o' the great outdoors I've had,
So why should I care if my aim is bad?

Old Mister Laughter

Old Mister Laughter
Comes a-grinnin' down the way,
Singin': "Never mind your troubles,
For they'll surely pass away."
Singin': "Now the sun is shinin'
An' there's roses everywhere;
To-morrow will be soon enough
To fret about your care."

Old Mister Laughter
Comes a-grinnin' at my door,
Singin': "Don't go after money
When you've got enough and more."
Singin': "Laugh with me this mornin'
An' be happy while you may.
What's the use of riches
If they never let you play?"

Old Mister Laughter
Comes a-grinnin' all the time,
Singin' happy songs o' gladness
In a good old-fashioned rhyme.
Singin': "Keep the smiles a-goin',
Till they write your epitaph,
And don't let fame or fortune
Ever steal away your laugh."

A Family Row

I freely confess there are good friends of mine,
With whom we are often invited to dine,
Who get on my nerves so that I cannot eat
Or stay with my usual ease in my seat;
For I know that if something should chance to occur
Which he may not like or which doesn't please her,
That we'll have to try to be pleasant somehow
While they stage a fine little family row.

Now a family row is a private affair,
And guests, I am certain, should never be there;
I have freely maintained that a man and his wife
Cannot always agree on their journey through life,
But they ought not to bicker and wrangle and shout
And show off their rage when their friends are about;
It takes all the joy from a party, I vow,
When some couple starts up a family row.

It's a difficult job to stay cool and polite
When your host and your hostess are staging a fight;

It's hard to talk sweet to a dame with a frown
Or smile at a man that you want to knock down.
You sit like a dummy and look far away,
But you just can't help hearing the harsh things
they say.
It ruins the dinner, I'm telling you now,
When your host and your hostess get mixed in
a row.

The Lucky Man

Luck had a favor to bestow
And wondered where to let it go.

"No lazy man on earth," said she,
"Shall get this happy gift from me.

"I will not pass it to the man
Who will not do the best he can.

"I will not make this splendid gift
To one who has not practiced thrift.

"It shall not benefit deceit,
Nor help the man who's played the cheat.

"He that has failed to fight with pluck
Shall never know the Goddess Luck.

"I'll look around a bit to see
What man has earned some help from me."

She found a man whose hands were soiled
Because from day to day he'd toiled.

He'd dreamed by night and worked by day
To make life's contest go his way.

He'd kept his post and daily slaved,
And something of his wage he'd saved.

He'd clutched at every circumstance
Which might have been his golden chance.

The goddess smiled and then, kerslap!
She dropped her favor in his lap.

Lonely

They're all away
And the house is still,
And the dust lies thick
On the window sill,
And the stairway creaks
In a solemn tone
This taunting phrase:
"You are all alone."

They've gone away
And the rooms are bare;
I miss his cap
From a parlor chair,
And I miss the toys
In the lonely hall,
But most of any
I miss his call.

I miss the shouts
And the laughter gay
Which greeted me
At the close of day,
And there isn't a thing
In the house we own
But sobbingly says:
"You are all alone."

It's only a house
That is mine to know,
An empty house
That is cold with woe;
Like a prison grim
With its bars of black,
And it won't be home
Till they all come back.

The Cookie Jar

You can rig up a house with all manner of things,
The prayer rugs of sultans and princes and kings;
You can hang on its walls the old tapestries rare
Which some dead Egyptian once treasured with care;
But though costly and gorgeous its furnishings are,
It must have, to be homelike, an old cookie jar.

There are just a few things that a home must possess,
Besides all your money and all your success —
A few good old books which some loved one has read,
Some trinkets of those whose sweet spirits have fled,

And then in the pantry, not shoved back too far
For the hungry to get to, that old cookie jar.

Let the house be a mansion, I care not at all!
Let the finest of pictures be hung on each wall,
Let the carpets be made of the richest velour,
And the chairs only those which great wealth
can procure,
I'd still want to keep for the joy of my flock
That homey, old-fashioned, well-filled cookie
crock.

Like the love of the Mother it shines through our
years;
It has soothed all our hurts and has dried away
tears;
It has paid us for toiling; in sorrow or joy,
It has always shown kindness to each girl and
boy;
And I'm sorry for people, whoever they are,
Who live in a house where there's no cookie jar.

Little Wrangles

Lord, we've had our little wrangles, an' we've
had our little bouts;
There's many a time, I reckon, that we have
been on the outs;
My tongue's a trifle hasty an' my temper's apt
to fly,
An' Mother, let me tell you, has a sting in her
reply,
But I couldn't live without her, an' it's plain
as plain can be
That in fair or sunny weather Mother needs a
man like me.

I've banged the door an' muttered angry words
beneath my breath,
For at times when she was scoldin' Mother's
plagued me most to death,
But we've always laughed it over, when we'd
both cooled down a bit,
An' we never had a difference but a smile would
settle it.
An' if such a thing could happen, we could
share life's joys an' tears
An' live right on together for another thousand
years.

Some men give up too easy in the game o' married life;
They haven't got the courage to be worthy of a wife;
An' I've seen a lot o' women that have made their lives a mess,
'Cause they couldn't bear the burdens that are mixed with happiness.
So long as folks are human they'll have many faults that jar,
An' the way to live with people is to take them as they are.

We've been forty years together, good an' bad, an' rain an' shine;
I've forgotten Mother's faults now an' she never mentions mine.
In the days when sorrow struck us an' we shared a common woe
We just leaned upon each other, an' our weakness didn't show.
An' I learned how much I need her an' how tender she can be
An' through it, maybe, Mother saw the better side o' me.

The rich may pay for orchids rare, but, Oh the
apple tree
Flings out its blossoms to the world for every
eye to see,
And all who sigh for loveliness may walk
beneath the sky
And claim a richer beauty than man's gold can
ever buy.

The blooming cherry trees are free for all to
look upon;
The dogwood buds for all of us, and not some
favorite one;
The wide outdoors is no man's own; the stranger
on the street
Can cast his eyes on many a rose and claim its
fragrance sweet.

Small gardens are shut in by walls, but none
can wall the sky,
And none can hide the friendly trees from all
who travel by;
And none can hold the apple boughs and claim
them for his own,
For all the beauties of the earth belong to God
alone.

So let me walk the world just now and wander
far and near;
Earth's loveliness is mine to see, its music mine
to hear;
There's not a single apple bough that spills its
blooms about
But I can claim the joy of it, and none can
shut me out.

"Where's Mamma?"

Comes in flying from the street;
"Where's Mamma?"
Friend or stranger thus he'll greet:
"Where's Mamma?"
Doesn't want to say hello,
Home from school or play he'll go
Straight to what he wants to know:
"Where's Mamma?"

Many times a day he'll shout,
"Where's Mamma?"
Seems afraid that she's gone out;
"Where's Mamma?"
Is his first thought at the door —
She's the one he's looking for,
And he questions o'er and o'er,
"Where's Mamma?"

Can't be happy till he knows:
"Where's Mamma?"
So he begs us to disclose
"Where's Mamma?"
And it often seems to me,
As I hear his anxious plea,
That no sweeter phrase can be:
"Where's Mamma?"

Like to hear it day by day;
"Where's Mamma?"
Loveliest phrase that lips can say:
"Where's Mamma?"
And I pray as time shall flow,
And the long years come and go,
That he'll always want to know
"Where's Mamma?"

Summer Dreams

Drowsy old summer, with nothing to do,
I'd like to be drowsin' an' dreamin' with you;
I'd like to stretch out in the shade of a tree,
An' fancy the white clouds were ships out at sea,
Or castles with turrets and treasures and things,
And peopled with princesses, fairies and kings,
An' just drench my soul with the glorious joy
Which was mine to possess as a barefooted boy.

Drowsy old summer, your skies are as blue
As the skies which a dreamy-eyed youngster
once knew,
An' I fancy to-day all the pictures are there —
The ships an' the pirates an' princesses fair,
The red scenes of battle, the gay, cheering
throngs
Which greeted the hero who righted all wrongs;
But somehow or other, these old eyes of mine
Can't see what they did as a youngster of nine.

Drowsy old summer, I'd like to forget
Some things which I've learned an' some hurts
I have met;
I'd like the old visions of splendor an' joy
Which were mine to possess as a barefooted boy
When I dreamed of the glorious deeds I would
do
As soon as I'd galloped my brief boyhood
through;
I'd like to come back an' look into your skies
With that wondrous belief an' those far-seeing
eyes.

Drowsy old summer, my dream days have gone;
Only things which are real I must now look
upon;
No longer I see in the skies overhead
The pictures that were, for the last one has
fled.
I have learned that not all of our dreams can
come true;
That the toilers are many and heroes are few:
But I'd like once again to look up there an' see
The man that I fancied some day I might be.

I Ain't Dead Yet

Time was I used to worry and I'd sit around
an' sigh,
And think with every ache I got that I was
goin' to die,
I'd see disaster comin' from a dozen different
ways
An' prophesy calamity an' dark and dreary days.
But I've come to this conclusion, that it's fool-
ishness to fret;
I've had my share o' sickness, but I
Ain't
Dead
Yet!

Wet springs have come to grieve me an' I've
grumbled at the showers,
But I can't recall a June-time that forgot to
bring the flowers.
I've had my business troubles, and looked fail-
ure in the face,
But the crashes I expected seemed to pass right
by the place.
So I'm takin' life more calmly, pleased with
everything I get,
An' not over-hurt by losses, 'cause I
Ain't
Dead
Yet!

I've feared a thousand failures an' a thousand
deaths I've died,
I've had this world in ruins by the gloom I've
prophesied.
But the sun shines out this mornin' an' the skies
above are blue,
An' with all my griefs an' trouble, I have some-
how lived 'em through.
There may be cares before me, much like those
that I have met;
Death will come some day an' take me, but I
Ain't
Dead
Yet!

The Cure for Weariness

Seemed like I couldn't stand it any more,
The factory whistles blowin' day by day,
An' men an' children hurryin' by the door,
An' street cars clangin' on their busy way.
The faces of the people seemed to be
Washed pale by tears o' grief an' strife an'
care,
Till everywhere I turned to I could see
The same old gloomy pictures of despair.

The windows of the shops all looked the same,
Decked out with stuff their owners wished to sell;
When visitors across our doorway came
I could recite the tales they'd have to tell.
All things had lost their old-time power to please;
Dog-tired I was an' irritable, too,
An' so I traded chimney tops for trees,
An' shingled roof for open skies of blue.

I dropped my tools an' took my rod an' line
An' tackle box an' left the busy town;
I found a favorite restin' spot of mine
Where no one seeks for fortune or renown.
I whistled to the birds that flew about,
An' built a lot of castles in my dreams;
I washed away the stains of care an' doubt
An' thanked the Lord for woods an' running streams.

I've cooked my meals before an open fire,
I've had the joy of green smoke in my face,
I've followed for a time my heart's desire
An' now the path of duty I retrace.
I've had my little fishin' trip, an' go
Once more contented to the haunts of men;
I'm ready now to hear the whistles blow
An' see the roofs an' chimney tops again.

To an Old Friend

When we have lived our little lives and wandered
all their byways through,
When we've seen all that we shall see and finished
all that we must do,
When we shall take one backward look off yonder
where our journey ends,
I pray that you shall be as glad as I shall be that
we were friends.

Time was we started out to find the treasures and
the joys of life;
We sought them in the land of gold through
many days of bitter strife.
When we were young we yearned for fame; in
search of joy we went afar,
Only to learn how very cold and distant all the
strangers are.

When we have met all we shall meet and know
what destiny has planned,
I shall rejoice in that last hour that I have known
your friendly hand;
I shall go singing down the way off yonder as
my sun descends
As one who's had a happy life, made glorious by
the best of friends.

Satisfied With Life

I have known the green trees and the skies overhead
And the blossoms of spring and the fragrance they shed;
I have known the blue sea, and the mountains afar
And the song of the pines and the light of a star;
And should I pass now, I could say with a smile
That my pilgrimage here has been well worth my while.

I have known the warm handclasp of friends who were true;
I have shared in their pleasures and wept with them, too;
I have heard the gay laughter which sweeps away care
And none of the comrades I've made could I spare;
And should this be all, I could say ere I go,
That life is worth while just such friendships to know.

I have builded a home where we've loved and
been glad;
I have known the rich joy of a girl and a lad;
I have had their caresses through storm and
through shine,
And watched them grow lovely, those youngsters
of mine;
And I think as I hold them at night on my knee,
That life has been generous surely to me.

Autumn Evenings

Apples on the table an' the grate-fire blazin' high,
Oh, I'm sure the whole world hasn't any happier
man than I;
The Mother sittin' mendin' little stockin's, toe an'
knee,
An' tellin' all that's happened through the busy
day to me:
Oh, I don't know how to say it, but these cosy
autumn nights
Seem to glow with true contentment an' a thous-
and real delights.

The dog sprawled out before me knows that
huntin' days are here,
'Cause he dreams and seems to whimper that a
flock o' quail are near;
An' the children playin' checkers till it's time
to go to bed,
Callin' me to settle questions whether black is
beatin' red;
Oh, these nights are filled with gladness, an' I
puff my pipe an' smile,
An' tell myself the struggle an' the work are both
worth while.

The flames are full o' pictures that keep dancin'
to an' fro,
Bringin' back the scenes o' gladness o' the happy
long ago,
An' the whole wide world is silent an' I tell my-
self just this—
That within these walls I cherish, there is all my
world there is!
Can I keep the love abiding in these hearts so
close to me,
An' the laughter of these evenings, I shall gain
life's victory.

These did not pass in selfishness; they died for
all mankind;
They died to build a better world for all who
stay behind;
And we who hold their memory dear, and bring
them flowers to-day,
Should consecrate ourselves once more to live
and die as they.

These were defenders of the faith and guardians
of the truth;
That you and I might live and love, they gladly
gave their youth;
And we who set this day apart to honor them
who sleep
Should pledge ourselves to hold the faith they
gave their lives to keep.

If tears are all we shed for them, then they have
died in vain;
If flowers are all we bring them now, forgotten
they remain;
If by their courage we ourselves to courage are
not led,
Then needlessly these graves have closed above
our heroes dead.

To symbolize our love with flowers is not enough
to do;
We must be brave as they were brave, and true
as they were true.
They died to build a better world, and we who
mourn to-day
Should consecrate ourselves once more to live
and die as they.

The Happy Man

If you would know a happy man,
Go find the fellow who
Has had a bout with trouble grim
And just come smiling through.

The load is off his shoulders now,
Where yesterday he frowned
And saw no joy in life, to-day
He laughs his way around.

He's done the very thing he thought
That he could never do;
His sun is shining high to-day
And all his skies are blue.

He's stronger than he was before;
Should trouble come anew
He'll know how much his strength can bear
And how much he can do.

To-day he has the right to smile,
And he may gaily sing,
For he has conquered where he feared
The pain of failure's sting.

Comparison has taught him, too,
The sweetest hours are those
Which follow on the heels of care,
With laughter and repose.

If you would meet a happy man,
Go find the fellow who
Has had a bout with trouble grim
And just come smiling through.

The Song of the Builder

I sink my piers to the solid rock,
And I send my steel to the sky,
And I pile up the granite, block by block
Full twenty stories high;
Nor wind nor weather shall wash away
The thing that I've builded, day by day.

Here's something of mine that shall ever stand
Till another shall tear it down;
Here is the work of my brain and hand,
Towering above the town.
And the idlers gay in their smug content,
Have nothing to leave for a monument.

Here from my girders I look below
At the throngs which travel by,
For little that's real will they leave to show
When it comes their time to die.
But I, when my time of life is through,
Will leave this building for men to view.

Oh, the work is hard and the days are long,
But hammers are tools for men,
And granite endures and steel is strong,
Outliving both brush and pen.
And ages after my voice is stilled,
Men shall know I lived by the things I build.

Old Years and New

Old years and new years, all blended into one,
The best of what there is to be, the best of what
is gone—
Let's bury all the failures in the dim and dusty
past
And keep the smiles of friendship and laughter
to the last.

Old years and new years, life's in the making
still;
We haven't come to glory yet, but there's the
hope we will;
The dead old year was twelve months long, but
now from it we're free,
And what's one year of good or bad to all the
years to be?

Old years and new years, we need them one
and all
To reach the dome of character and build its
sheltering wall;
Past failures tried the souls of us, but if their
tests we stood,
The sum of what we are to be may yet be counted
good.

Old years and new years, with all their pain and strife,
Are but the bricks and steel and stone with which we fashion life;
So put the sin and shame away, and keep the fine and true,
And on the glory of the past let's build the better new.

When We're All Alike

I've trudged life's highway up and down;
I've watched the lines of men march by;
I've seen them in the busy town,
And seen them under country sky;
I've talked with toilers in the ranks,
And walked with men whose hands were white,
And learned, when closed were stores and banks,
We're nearly all alike at night.

Just find the wise professor when
He isn't lost in ancient lore,
And he, like many other men,
Romps with his children on the floor.
He puts his gravity aside
To share in innocent delight.
Stripped of position's pomp and pride,
We're nearly all the same at night.

Serving a common cause, we go
Unto our separate tasks by day,
And rich or poor or great or low,
Regardless of their place or pay,
Cherish the common dreams of men—
A home where love and peace unite.
We serve the self-same end and plan,
We're all alike when it is night.

Each for his loved ones wants to do
His utmost. Brothers are we all,
When we have run the work-day through,
In romping with our children small;
Rich men and poor delight in play
When care and caste have taken flight.
At home, in all we think and say,
We're very much the same at night

The Things You Can't Forget

They ain't much, seen from day to day—
The big elm tree across the way,
The church spire, an' the meetin' place
Lit up by many a friendly face.
You pass 'em by a dozen times
An' never think o' them in rhymes,
Or fit for poet's singin'. Yet
They're all the things you can't forget;
An' they're the things you'll miss some day
If ever you should go away.

The people here ain't much to see—
Jes' common folks like you an' me,
Doin' the ordinary tasks
Which life of everybody asks:
Old Dr. Green, still farin' 'round
To where his patients can be found,
An' Parson Hill, serene o' face,
Carryin' God's message every place,
An' Jim, who keeps the grocery store—
Yet they are folks you'd hunger for.

They seem so plain when close to view—
Bill Barker, an' his brother too,
The Jacksons, men of higher rank
Because they chance to run the bank,
Yet friends to every one round here,

Quiet an' kindly an' sincere,
Not much to sing about or praise,
Livin' their lives in modest ways—
Yet in your memory they'd stay
If ever you should go away.

These are things an' these the men
Some day you'll long to see again.
Now it's so near you scarcely see
The beauty o' that big elm tree,
But some day later on you will
An' wonder if it's standin' still,
An' if the birds return to sing
An' make their nests there every spring.
Mebbe you scorn them now, but they
Will bring you back again some day.

The Making of Friends

If nobody smiled and nobody cheered and nobody
helped us along,
If each every minute looked after himself and
good things all went to the strong,
If nobody cared just a little for you, and nobody
thought about me,
And we stood all alone to the battle of life, what
a dreary old world it would be!

If there were no such a thing as a flag in the sky
as a symbol of comradeship here,
If we lived as the animals live in the woods, with
nothing held sacred or dear,
And selfishness ruled us from birth to the end,
and never a neighbor had we,
And never we gave to another in need, what a
dreary old world it would be!

Oh, if we were rich as the richest on earth and
strong as the strongest that lives,
Yet never we knew the delight and the charm of
the smile which the other man gives,
If kindness were never a part of ourselves,
though we owned all the land we could see,
And friendship meant nothing at all to us here,
what a dreary old world it would be!

Life is sweet just because of the friends we have
made and the things which in common we
share;
We want to live on not because of ourselves, but
because of the people who care;
It's giving and doing for somebody else—on that
all life's splendor depends,
And the joy of this world, when you've summed
it all up, is found in the making of friends.

The Deeds of Anger

I used to lose my temper an' git mad an' tear around
An' raise my voice so wimmin folks would tremble at the sound;
I'd do things I was ashamed of when the fit of rage had passed,
An' wish I hadn't done 'em, an' regret 'em to the last;
But I've learned from sad experience how useless is regret,
For the mean things done in anger are the things you can't forget.

'Tain't no use to kiss the youngster once your hand has made him cry;
You'll recall the time you struck him till the very day you die;
He'll forget it an' forgive you an' to-morrow seem the same,
But you'll keep the hateful picture of your sorrow an' your shame,
An' it's bound to rise to taunt you, though you long have squared the debt,
For the things you've done in meanness are the things you can't forget.

Lord, I sometimes sit an' shudder when some
scene comes back to me,
Which shows me big an' brutal in some act o'
tyranny,
When some triflin' thing upset me an' I let my
temper fly,
An' was sorry for it after—but it's vain to sit an'
sigh.
So I'd be a whole sight happier now my sun
begins to set,
If it wasn't for the meanness which I've done
an' can't forget.

Now I think I've learned my lesson an' I'm
treadin' gentler ways,
An' I try to build my mornings into happy yes-
terdays;
I don't let my temper spoil 'em in the way I used
to do
An' let some splash of anger smear the record
when it's through;
I want my memories pleasant, free from shame
or vain regret,
Without any deeds of anger which I never can
forget.

I'd Rather Be a Failure

I'd rather be a failure than the man who's never tried;
I'd rather seek the mountain-top than always stand aside.
Oh, let me hold some lofty dream and make my desperate fight,
And though I fail I still shall know I tried to serve the right.

The idlers line the ways of life and they are quick to sneer;
They note the failing strength of man and greet it with a jeer;
But there is something deep inside which scoffers fail to view—
They never see the glorious deed the failure tried to do.

Some men there are who never leave the city's well-worn streets;
They never know the dangers grim the bold adventurer meets;
They never seek a better way nor serve a nobler plan;
They never risk with failure to advance the cause of man.

Oh, better 'tis to fail and fall in sorrow and
despair,
Than stand where all is safe and sure and never
face a care;
Yes, stamp me with the failure's brand and let
men sneer at me,
For though I've failed the Lord shall know the
man I tried to be.

Couldn't Live Without You

You're just a little fellow with a lot of funny
ways,
Just three-foot-six of mischief set with eyes that
fairly blaze;
You're always up to something with those busy
hands o' yours,
And you leave a trail o' ruin on the walls an' on
the doors,
An' I wonder, as I watch you, an' your curious
tricks I see,
Whatever is the reason that you mean so much
to me.

You're just a chubby rascal with a grin upon
your face,
Just seven years o' gladness, an' a hard and
trying case;
You think the world's your playground, an' in
all you say an' do
You fancy everybody ought to bow an' scrape to
you;
Dull care's a thing you laugh at just as though
'twill never be,
So I wonder, little fellow, why you mean so
much to me.

Now your face is smeared with candy or perhaps
it's only dirt,
An' it's really most alarming how you tear your
little shirt;
But I have to smile upon you, an' with all your
wilful ways,
I'm certain that I need you 'round about me
all my days;
Yes, I've got to have you with me, for somehow
it's come to be
That I couldn't live without you, for you're all
the world to me.

Just a Boy

Get to understand the lad—
He's not eager to be bad;
If the right he always knew,
He would be as old as you.
Were he now exceeding wise,
He'd be just about your size;
When he does things that annoy,
Don't forget, he's just a boy.

Could he know and understand,
He would need no guiding hand;
But he's young and hasn't learned
How life's corners must be turned;
Doesn't know from day to day
There is more in life than play,
More to face than selfish joy—
Don't forget he's just a boy.

Being just a boy, he'll do
Much you will not want him to;
He'll be careless of his ways,
Have his disobedient days,
Wilful, wild and headstrong, too,
Just as, when a boy, were you;
Things of value he'll destroy,
But, reflect, he's just a boy.

Just a boy who needs a friend,
Patient, kindly to the end,
Needs a father who will show
Him the things he wants to know;
Take him with you when you walk,
Listen when he wants to talk,
His companionship enjoy,
Don't forget, he's just a boy!

What Home's Intended For

When the young folks gather 'round in the good
old-fashioned way,
Singin' all the latest songs gathered from the
newest play,
Or they start the phonograph an' shove the chairs
back to the wall
An' hold a little party dance, I'm happiest of all.
Then I sorter settle back, plumb contented to the
core,
An' I tell myself most proudly, that's what
home's intended for.

When the laughter's gaily ringin' an' the room is
filled with song,
I like to sit an' watch 'em, all that glad an' merry
throng,
For the ragtime they are playin' on the old piano
there

Beats any high-toned music where the bright lights shine an' glare,
An' the racket they are makin' stirs my pulses more and more,
So I whisper in my gladness: that's what home's intended for.

Then I smile an' say to Mother, let 'em move the chairs about,
Let 'em frolic in the parlor, let 'em shove the tables out,
Jus' so long as they are near us, jus' so long as they will stay
By the fireplace we are keepin', harm will never come their way,
An' you'll never hear me grumble at the bills that keep me poor,
It's the finest part o' livin'—that's what home's intended for.

Safe at Home

Let the old fire blaze
An' the youngsters shout
An' the dog on the rug
Sprawl full length out,
An' Mother an' I
Sort o' settle down—
An' it's little we care
For the noisy town.

Oh, it's little we care
  That the wind may blow,
An' the streets grow white
  With the drifted snow;
We'll face the storm
  With the break o' day,
But to-night we'll dream
  An' we'll sing an' play.

We'll sit by the fire
  Where it's snug an' warm,
An' pay no heed
  To the winter storm;
With a sheltering roof
  Let the blizzard roar;
We are safe at home—
  Can a king say more?

That's all that counts
  When the day is done:
The smiles of love
  And the youngsters' fun,
The cares put down
  With the evening gloam—
Here's the joy of all:
  To be safe at home.

When Friends Drop In

It may be I'm old-fashioned, but the times I like
the best
Are not the splendid parties with the women
gaily dressed,
And the music tuned for dancing and the laughter
of the throng,
With a paid comedian's antics or a hired musi-
cian's song,
But the quiet times of friendship, with the
chuckles and the grin,
And the circle at the fireside when a few good
friends drop in.

There's something 'round the fireplace that no
club can imitate,
And no throng can ever equal just a few folks
near the grate;
Though I sometimes like an opera, there's no
music quite so sweet
As the singing of the neighbors that you're al-
ways glad to meet;
Oh, I know when they come calling that the fun
will soon begin,
And I'm happiest those evenings when a few
good friends drop in.

There's no pomp of preparation, there's no style
or sham or fuss;
We are glad to welcome callers who are glad to
be with us,
And we sit around and visit or we start a merry
game,
And we show them by our manner that we're
mighty pleased they came,
For there's something real about it, and the yarns
we love to spin,
And the time flies, Oh, so swiftly when a few
good friends drop in.

Let me live my life among them, cheerful, kindly
folks and true,
And I'll ask no greater glory till my time of life
is through;
Let me share the love and favor of the few who
know me best,
And I'll spend my time contented till my sun
sinks in the west;
I will take what fortune sends me and the little
I may win,
And be happy on those evenings when a few
good friends drop in.

Turn me loose and let me be
Young once more and fancy free;
Let me wander where I will,
Down the lane and up the hill,
Trudging barefoot in the dust
In an age that knows no "must,"
And no voice insistently
Speaks of duty unto me;
Let me tread the happy ways
Of those by-gone yesterdays.

Fame had never whispered then,
Making slaves of eager men;
Greed had never called me down
To the gray walls of the town,
Offering frankincense and myrrh
If I'd be its prisoner;
I was free to come and go
Where the cherry blossoms blow,
Free to wander where I would,
Finding life supremely good.

But I turned, as all must do,
From the happiness I knew

To the land of care and strife,
Seeking for a fuller life;
Heard the lure of fame and sought
That renown so dearly bought;
Listened to the voice of greed
Saying: "These the things you need,"
Now the gray town holds me fast,
Prisoner to the very last.

Age has stamped me as its own;
Youth to younger hearts has flown;
Still the cherry blossoms blow
In the land I used to know;
Still the fragrant clover spills
Perfume over dales and hills,
But I'm not allowed to stray
Where the young are free to play;
All the years will grant to me
Is the book of memory.

Pretending Not to See

Sometimes at the table, when
He gets misbehavin', then
Mother calls across to me:
"Look at him, now! Don't you see
What he's doin', sprawlin' there!
Make him sit up in his chair.
Don't you see the messy way
That he's eating?" An' I say:
"No. He seems all right just now.
What's he doing anyhow?"

Mother placed him there by me,
An' she thinks I ought to see
Every time he breaks the laws
An' correct him, just because
There will come a time some day
When he mustn't act that way.
But I can't be all along
Scoldin' him for doin' wrong.
So if something goes astray,
I jus' look the other way.

Mother tells me now an' then
I'm the easiest o' men,
An' in dealin' with the lad
I will never see the bad
That he does, an' I suppose
Mother's right for Mother knows;
But I'd hate to feel that I'm
Here to scold him all the time.
Little faults might spoil the day,
So I look the other way.

Look the other way an' try
Not to let him catch my eye,
Knowin' all the time that he
Doesn't mean so bad to be;
Knowin', too, that now an' then
I am not the best o' men;
Hopin', too, the times I fall
That the Father of us all,
Lovin', watchin' over me,
Will pretend He doesn't see.

The Joys of Home

Curling smoke from a chimney low,
And only a few more steps to go,
Faces pressed at a window pane
Watching for someone to come again,
And I am the someone they wait to see—
These are the joys life gives to me.

What has my neighbor excelling this:
A good wife's love and a baby's kiss?
What if his chimneys tower higher?
Peace is found at our humble fire.
What if his silver and gold are more?
Rest is ours when the day is o'er.

Strive for fortune and slave for fame,
You find that joy always stays the same:
Rich man and poor man dream and pray
For a home where laughter shall ever stay,
And the wheels go round and men spend their
might
For the few glad hours they may claim at night.

Home, where the kettle shall gaily sing,
Is all that matters with serf or king;
Gold and silver and laureled fame
Are only sweet when the hearth's aflame
With a cheerful fire, and the loved ones there
Are unafraid of the wolves of care.

So let me come home at night to rest
With those who know I have done my best;
Let the wife rejoice and my children smile,
And I'll know by their love that I am worth
while,
For this is conquest and world success—
A home where abideth happiness.

We're Dreamers All

Oh, man must dream of gladness wherever his
pathways lead,
And a hint of something better is written in every
creed;
And nobody wakes at morning but hopes ere the
day is o'er
To have come to a richer pleasure than ever he's
known before.

For man is a dreamer ever. He glimpses the
hills afar
And plans for the joys off yonder where all his
to-morrows are;
When trials and cares beset him, in the distance
he still can see
A hint of a future splendid and the glory that
is to be.

There's never a man among us but cherishes
dreams of rest;
We toil for that something better than that which
is now our best.
Oh, what if the cup be bitter and what if we're
racked with pain?
There are wonderful days to follow when never
we'll grieve again.

Back of the sound of the hammer, and back of
the hissing steam,
And back of the hand at the throttle is ever a
lofty dream;
All of us, great or humble, look over the present
need
To the dawn of the glad to-morrow which is
promised in every creed.

What Is Success?

Success is being friendly when another needs a friend;
It's in the cheery words you speak, and in the coins you lend;
Success is not alone in skill and deeds of daring great;
It's in the roses that you plant beside your garden gate.

Success is in the way you walk the paths of life each day;
It's in the little things you do and in the things you say;
Success is in the glad hello you give your fellow man;
It's in the laughter of your home and all the joys you plan.

Success is not in getting rich or rising high to fame;
It's not alone in winning goals which all men hope to claim;
It's in the man you are each day, through happiness or care;
It's in the cheery words you speak and in the smile you wear.

Success is being big of heart and clean and broad
of mind;
It's being faithful to your friends, and to the
stranger, kind;
It's in the children whom you love, and all they
learn from you—
Success depends on character and everything you
do.

The Three Me's

I'd like to steal a day and be
All alone with little me,
Little me that used to run
Everywhere in search of fun;
Little me of long ago
Who was glad and didn't know
Life is freighted down with care
For the backs of men to bear;
Little me who thought a smile
Ought to linger all the while
On his Mother's pretty face
And a tear should never trace
Lines of sorrow, hurt or care
On those cheeks so wondrous fair.

I should like once more to be
All alone with youthful me;
Youthful me who saw the hills
Where the sun its splendor spills
And was certain that in time
To the topmost height he'd climb;
Youthful me, serene of soul,
Who beheld a shining goal.
And imagined he could gain
Glory without grief or pain,
Confident and quick with life,
Madly eager for the strife,
Knowing not that bitter care
Waited for his coming there.

I should like to sit alone
With the me now older grown,
Like to lead the little me
And the youth that used to be
Once again along the ways
Of our glorious yesterdays.
We could chuckle soft and low
At the things we didn't know,
And could laugh to think how bold
We had been in days of old,
And how blind we were to care
With its heartache and despair,
We could smile away the tears
And the pain of later years.

Brothers All

Under the toiler's grimy shirt,
Under the sweat and the grease and dirt,
Under the rough outside you view,
Is a man who thinks and feels as you.

Go talk with him,
Go walk with him,
Sit down with him by a running stream,
Away from the things that are hissing steam,
Away from his bench,
His hammer and wrench,
And the grind of need
And the sordid deed,
And this you'll find
As he bares his mind:
In the things which count when this life is through
He's as tender and big and as good as you.

Be fair with him,
And share with him
An hour of time in a restful place,
Brother to brother and face to face,
And he'll whisper low
Of the long ago,
Of a loved one dead
And the tears he shed;
And you'll come to see
That in suffering he,
With you, is hurt by the self-same rod
And turns for help to the self-same God.

You hope as he,
You dream of splendors, and so does he;
His children must be as you'd have yours be;
He shares your love
For the Flag above,
He laughs and sings
For the self-same things;
When he's understood
He is mostly good,
Thoughtful of others and kind and true,
Brave, devoted—and much like you.

Under the toiler's grimy shirt,
Under the sweat and the grease and dirt,
Under the rough outside you view,
Is a man who thinks and feels as you.

When We Understand the Plan

I reckon when the world we leave
And cease to smile and cease to grieve,
When each of us shall quit the strife
And drop the working tools of life,
Somewhere, somehow, we'll come to find
Just what our Maker had in mind.

Perhaps through clearer eyes than these
We'll read life's hidden mysteries,
And learn the reason for our tears—
Why sometimes came unhappy years,
And why our dearest joys were brief
And bound so closely unto grief.

There is so much beyond our scope,
As blindly on through life we grope,
So much we cannot understand,
However wisely we have planned,
That all who walk this earth about
Are constantly beset by doubt.

No one of us can truly say
Why loved ones must be called away,
Why hearts are hurt, or e'en explain
Why some must suffer years of pain;
Yet some day all of us shall know
The reason why these things are so.

I reckon in the years to come,
When these poor lips of clay are dumb,
And these poor hands have ceased to toil,
Somewhere upon a fairer soil
God shall to all of us make clear
The purpose of our trials here.

The Spoiler

With a twinkle in his eye
He'd come gayly walkin' by
An' he'd whistle to the children
  An' he'd beckon 'em to come,
Then he'd chuckle low an' say,
"Come along, I'm on my way,
An' it's I that need your company
  To buy a little gum."

When his merry call they'd hear,
All the children, far an' near,
Would come flyin' from the gardens
  Like the chickens after wheat;
When we'd shake our heads an' say:
"No, you mustn't go to-day!"
He'd beg to let him have 'em
  In a pack about his feet.

Oh, he spoiled 'em, one an' all;
There was not a youngster small
But was over-fed on candy
  An' was stuffed with lollypops,
An' I think his greatest joy
Was to get some girl or boy
An' bring 'em to their parents
  All besmeared by chocolate drops.

Now the children's hearts are sore
For he comes to them no more,
And no more to them he whistles
  And no more for them he stops;
But in Paradise, I think,
With his chuckle and his wink,
He is leading little angels
  To the heavenly candy shops.

A Vanished Joy

When I was but a little lad of six and seven and eight,
One joy I knew that has been lost in customs up-to-date,
Then Saturday was baking day and Mother used to make,
The while I stood about and watched, the Sunday pies and cake;
And I was there to have fulfilled a small boy's fondest wish,
The glorious privilege of youth—to scrape the frosting dish!

On Saturdays I never left to wander far away—
I hovered near the kitchen door on Mother's baking day;
The fragrant smell of cooking seemed to hold me in its grip,
And naught cared I for other sports while there were sweets to sip;
I little cared that all my chums had sought the brook to fish;
I chose to wait that moment glad when I could scrape the dish.

Full many a slice of apple I have lifted from a pie
Before the upper crust went on, escaping Mother's eye;
Full many a time my fingers small in artfulness have strayed
Into some sweet temptation rare which Mother's hands had made;
But eager-eyed and watery-mouthed, I craved the greater boon,
When Mother let me clean the dish and lick the frosting spoon.

The baking days of old are gone, our children cannot know
The glorious joys that childhood owned and loved so long ago.
New customs change the lives of all and in their heartless way
They've robbed us of the glad event once known as baking day.
The stores provide our every need, yet many a time I wish
Our kids could know that bygone thrill and scrape the frosting dish.

"Carry On"

They spoke it bravely, grimly, in their darkest
hours of doubt;
They spoke it when their hope was low and
when their strength gave out;
We heard it from the dying in those troubled
days now gone,
And they breathed it as their slogan for the
living: "Carry on!"

Now the days of strife are over, and the skies
are fair again,
But those two brave words of courage on our
lips should still remain;
In the trials which beset us and the cares we
look upon,
To our dead we should be faithful — we have
still to "carry on!"

"Carry on!" through storm and danger, "carry
on" through dark despair,
"Carry on" through hurt and failure, "carry
on" through grief and care;
'Twas the slogan they bequeathed us as they
fell beside the way,
And for them and for our children, let us
"carry on!" to-day.

Life's Single Standard

There are a thousand ways to cheat and a
thousand ways to sin;
There are ways uncounted to lose the game, but
there's only one way to win;
And whether you live by the sweat of your brow
or in luxury's garb you're dressed,
You shall stand at last, when your race is run,
to be judged by the single test.

Some men lie by the things they make; some
lie in the deeds they do;
And some play false for a woman's love, and
some for a cheer or two;
Some rise to fame by the force of skill, grow
great by the might of power,
Then wreck the temple they toiled to build,
in a single, shameful hour.

The follies outnumber the virtues good; sin
lures in a thousand ways;
But slow is the growth of man's character and
patience must mark his days;
For only those victories shall count, when the
work of life is done,
Which bear the stamp of an honest man, and
by courage and faith were won.

There are a thousand ways to fail, but only one way to win!
Sham cannot cover the wrong you do nor wash out a single sin,
And never shall victory come to you, whatever of skill you do,
Save you've done your best in the work of life and unto your best were true.

Learn to Smile

The good Lord understood us when He taught us how to smile;
He knew we couldn't stand it to be solemn all the while;
He knew He'd have to shape us so that when our hearts were gay,
We could let our neighbors know it in a quick and easy way.

So He touched the lips of Adam and He touched the lips of Eve,
And He said: "Let these be solemn when your sorrows make you grieve,

But when all is well in Eden and your life seems
worth the while,
Let your faces wear the glory and the sunshine
of a smile.

"Teach the symbol to your children, pass it
down through all the years.
Though they know their share of sadness and
shall weep their share of tears,
Through the ages men and women shall prove
their faith in Me
By the smile upon their faces when their hearts
are trouble-free."

The good Lord understood us when He sent us
down to earth,
He knew our need for laughter and for happy
signs of mirth;
He knew we couldn't stand it to be solemn all
the while,
But must share our joy with others — so He
taught us how to smile.

The True Man

This is the sort of a man was he:
True when it hurt him a lot to be;
Tight in a corner an' knowin' a lie
Would have helped him out, but he wouldn't
buy
His freedom there in so cheap a way —
He told the truth though he had to pay.

Honest! Not in the easy sense,
When he needn't worry about expense —
We'll all play square when it doesn't count
And the sum at stake's not a large amount —
But he was square when the times were bad,
An' keepin' his word took all he had.

Honor is something we all profess,
But most of us cheat — some more, some less —
An' the real test isn't the way we do
When there isn't a pinch in either shoe;
It's whether we're true to our best or not
When the right thing's certain to hurt a lot.

That is the sort of a man was he:
Straight when it hurt him a lot to be;
Times when a lie would have paid him well,
No matter the cost, the truth he'd tell;
An' he'd rather go down to a drab defeat
Than save himself if he had to cheat.

Cleaning the Furnace

Last night Pa said to Ma: "My dear, it's
gettin' on to fall,
It's time I did a little job I do not like at all.
I wisht 'at I was rich enough to hire a man to do
The dirty work around this house an' clean up
when he's through,
But since I'm not, I'm truly glad that I am
strong an' stout,
An' ain't ashamed to go myself an' clean the
furnace out."

Then after supper Pa put on his overalls an'
said
He'd work down in the cellar till 'twas time to
go to bed.
He started in to rattle an' to bang an' poke an'
stir,
An' the dust began a-climbin' up through every
register
Till Ma said: "Goodness gracious! go an' shut
those things up tight
Or we'll all be suffocated an' the house will be
a sight."

Then he carted out the ashes in a basket an' a pail,
An' from cellar door to alley he just left an ashy trail.
Then he pulled apart the chimney, an' 'twas full of something black,
An' he skinned most all his knuckles when he tried to put it back.
We could hear him talkin' awful, an' Ma looked at us an' said:
"I think it would be better if you children went to bed."

When he came up from the cellar there were ashes in his hair,
There were ashes in his eyebrows — but he didn't seem to care —
There were ashes in his mustache, there were ashes in his eyes,
An' we never would have known him if he'd took us by surprise.
"Well, I got it clean," he sputtered, and Ma said: "I guess that's true;
Once the dirt was in the furnace, but now most of it's on you."

Trouble Brings Friends

It's seldom trouble comes alone. I've noticed this: When things go wrong
An' trouble comes a-visitin', it always brings a friend along;
Sometimes it's one you've known before, and then perhaps it's someone new
Who stretches out a helping hand an' stops to see what he can do.

If never trials came to us, if grief an' sorrow passed us by,
If every day the sun came out an' clouds were never in the sky,
We'd still have neighbors, I suppose, each one pursuin' selfish ends,
But only neighbors they would be — we'd never know them as our friends.

Out of the troubles I have had have come my richest friendships here,
Kind hands have helped to bear my care, kind words have fallen on my ear;
An' so I say when trouble comes I know before the storm shall end
That I shall find my bit of care has also brought to me a friend.

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